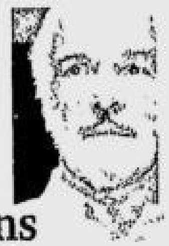
OPINION / A16



Diplomatic pouch: UK envoy to RP, Peter Beckingham, writes 1st piece in new column, a forum for foreign missions

WORLD / A28

Dressed in yellow, Thais shower their king with tributes, affection on his 80th birthday

WORLD / A28

US not ruling out attack vs Iran

BUSINESS / B1

Peso breaks into 41:$1; Citi sees 37.50 in '08

Woman abused by 7 priests gets $500,000 settlement

LOS ANGELES—A WOMAN WHO WAS sexually abused by seven Roman Catholic priests and had a baby by one of them has received a $500,000 settlement from America's largest archdiocese.

The $500,000 payment to Rita Milla, 46, was part of a $660-million global settlement the diocese had reached collectively

WOMAN/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, December 6, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 361 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Too many people in Bali pollute climate summit

NGEK! NAG DAGDAG PA SA PROBLEMA!

BALI, INDONESIA—Never before have so many people converged to try to save the planet from the catastrophic effects of global warming, with more than 10,000 jet-

TOO MANY/ A12

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL. And they came to the 2nd "Adeste Fideles 2007" concert presented by the Management Association of the Philippines at the PICC to listen to the best-loved songs during this country's best-loved season as interpreted by the best of Filipino tenors and sopranos. For the stirring finale (above), they all sang Handel's "Hallelujah." From left, Sherwin Sozon, Jennifer Uy, Karla Gutierrez, Nolyn Cabahug, Abdul Candao, Rachelle Gerodias, Elaine Lee, Randy Gilongo. *(Story on Page A22)*

MANDY NAVASERO

Church backs farmers

Ateneo also supports Sumilao folk

By Jerome Aning

FARMERS CALLING ON THE government to place a 144-hectare property in Sumilao, Bukidnon, under agrarian reform coverage have gained fresh support from Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales.

Rosales, who served 11 years as bishop of the Malaybalay Diocese which covers the entire Bukidnon province, told the farmers last night that he had asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to give the estate to them as he lamented their sufferings in their bid for ownership.

Rosales read the letter he sent recently to the President in a Mass he celebrated for the farmers at the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City. "In the contest between the rich and the poor, the bias always goes in favor of the rich and the powerful," he said.

The farmers were also given encouragement by the Ateneo. Its president, Fr. Bienvenido Nebres SJ, led university officials in signing a petition manifesting their support for the farmers' desire to own the land.

The Office of the President (OP) remanded the Sumilao case to the Department of Agrarian Reform on Nov. 16.

In a press conference yesterday, Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman promised a quick resolution of the conversion controversy surrounding the property as "only but proper to enable all the concerned parties to move on."

Fifty-five of the farmers walked for nearly two months from Sumilao all the way to Metro Manila, asking the DAR to rule on whether San Miguel Foods Inc. (SMFI), which bought the contested property, violated the terms of the conversion of the land into an agro-industrial estate.

The conversion was promised by the pre-

CHURCH/ A6

SUMILAO FARMERS

HAVE A HEART: Most of the 55 farmers who walked for 2 months from Sumilao, Bukidnon, to Manila break down as they reach San Miguel Corp. whose subsidiary is the new owner of their land. JOAN BONDOC

Opposition solon urges Transco probe in House

By Norman Bordadora

AN OPPOSITION CONGRESSMAN yesterday called for an investigation of the upcoming sale of the government's multibillion-dollar power transmission assets, warning against a potential scam.

Rep. Teofisto Guingona III said in a privilege speech that the auction on Dec. 12 of National Transmission Corp. (Transco) would make the aborted $329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with China's ZTE Corp. "so trivial."

Guingona said that Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), which was tasked to oversee the auction, had shown partiality "that must be investigated."

He criticized PSALM for saying that Transco was worth $3 billion-$4 billion when its value was probably double that amount.

The Bukidnon congressman, referring to news reports, said La Costa Development Corp. of nickel mining businessman Salvador Zamora and former Finance Secretary Roberto De Ocampo

OPPOSITION/ A10

24 'surprised' Makati cops axed; Binay mad

By Kristine L. Alave, Alcuin Papa and Julie Aurelio

THEY WERE CAUGHT BY SURPRISE!

Thus said Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay objecting to the suspension yesterday by Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Avelino Razon of the 24 local policemen in connection with the Peninsula takeover.

Makati City policemen were surprised by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV when he led a walkout during a coup d'etat trial last week. So surprised were they that they failed to stop Trillanes and company's 3-km march from J.P. Rizal to the Peninsula on Makati Avenue that sparked a seven-hour standoff last week, according to Binay.

In a press briefing, Binay said the relief of the policemen, led by Makati police officer in charge Supt. Angel Sumulong, had "demoralized" the ranks, describing it as "out of proportion."

24 MAKATI/ A6

Magdalo dry run for escape dries up; soldier nabbed

By Alcuin Papa, Nikko Dizon and Tarra Quismundo

IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A DRY RUN for the escape to the United States of officers involved in the Peninsula Manila hotel standoff last week, but an unidentified informant spoiled the plan and led police to the arrest of Pfc Alvin Celestino early yesterday.

Celestino, 36, showed up at 4 a.m. at

MAGDALO/ A6

LYN RILLON

OUTNUMBERED BUT NEVER OUTTALKED: The "tres Marias" of ABS-CBN, Luchi Cruz Valdes (left), Maria Ressa (right) and Chari Villa (center) fire their verbal guns nonstop at one point at (from right), PNP chief Avelino Razon, DILG Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Defense Undersecretary Marius Corpus and Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro.

DOJ supports Munti plan for Pen mutineers

By Leila B. Salaverria

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ yesterday expressed agreement with the plan of state prosecutors to have Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and 34 other soldiers and civilians moved from Camp Crame to the state penitentiary in Muntinlupa City.

DOJ SUPPORTS/ A8

The Pen or the Sword? ABS-CBN news execs claw at gov't officials in dialogue

By Fe Zamora

MAINTAINING THE CONSTITUTIONAL right to information, three executives of the ABS-CBN network yesterday assailed government officials for the arrest and cuffing of members of the media, including a number of their own, in the wake of the failed revolt at the Peninsula Manila on Nov. 29.

In a dialogue held at the hotel, the scene of the "crime," Maria Ressa, Chari Villa and Luchie Cruz-Valdez argued their position with Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon and other government officials in attendance.

"It was a request, not a command" was the response of Villa, head of the ABS-CBN news-gathering team, to Razon's explanation that the journalists were arrested for ignoring a police "request" that they vacate the "crime scene" as an assault was underway.

Puno said the journalists were arrested for "consistent and persistent refusal to obey" police standard operating procedures and for "obstruction of justice."

He said that unless these procedures

THE PEN/ A8

'Big Bad News' Barias: 3 disasters in less than two months in office

By Alcuin Papa

AMONG THE TAGALOGS, IF YOU keep on bringing bad luck, you are said to have a *balat sa puwit* (birthmark on the butt).

Some people may be wondering if Metro Manila's police commander, Director Geary Barias, has one.

Since he assumed his position as head of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) on Oct. 2, "Bad News" or "Bad Luck" Barias has run into a string of mishaps.

On Oct. 19, a powerful explosion at the Glorietta 2 Mall jolted him. Less

BIG BAD NEWS/ A9

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Second FrontPage

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PUEDENG SUMAMA?

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered light rains. Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies and scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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On to London for GMA

Spain state visit ends with P9.2 B in investments for RP

By Michael Lim Ubac

MADRID (VIA PLDT)—THE four-day state visit to Spain of President Macapagal-Arroyo has generated new investments in agriculture and fisheries and renewable energy development amounting to P9.2 billion.

Topping the list of the agreements are those on food and fisheries, investments in jatropha feedstock production, sustainable coastal management, microfinancing technology and joint research in biotechnology and cassava biofuel feedstock technology.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the agreements were made possible after President Arroyo met with members of the investment community here, "especially those with very serious intentions of either expanding their present operations in the Philippines or opening new ventures."

Bunye said that aside from the memorandum of agreements signed here, Spanish businessmen have expressed interest in five sectors—beverage, ports and terminals, roads and tollways, tourism facilities and the establishment of investment funds.

Bullish on RP

This proved that the Spanish business community is bullish on the Philippines, said Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila.

The President officially ended her state visit here with a visit to the autonomous government of Andalusia, Spain's southernmost region. The President and her party were to leave late Wednesday for London for a two-day official visit.

Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri, said the Spanish visit had "solidified" several commitments in biofuel investments in the country.

Zubiri, who was asked to join the trip to push for the renewable energy program, said these were "exciting times for both our nations."

"The trip's real gains are greatly economic in nature that will generate jobs for Filipinos in the biofuels sector and clean energy, in addition to renewed cultural ties with Spain," he added.

Strong interest from Spanish investors is giving the local renewable energy sector a much-needed boost, especially at a time when the passage of the Renewable Energy Bill is being pushed in Congress, he said.

"As author of the Biofuels Law, it delights me to know that it has started an agro-industrial revolution in the countryside with this trip, getting investments for Palawan and Davao Oriental and other parts of the country for bioethanol and biodiesel," said Zubiri who returned to Manila yesterday.

He noted that Spain's interest in the country's renewable energy sector was very significant, considering that Spain was considered the world's second largest user of renewable energy.

New jobs

He said negotiations were also ongoing with several Spanish corporations to invest in wind and solar power, noting that Spain is the largest producer of renewable energy in Europe.

Senator Edgardo Angara told reporters here that he had secured 300 jobs for his constituents in Aurora to work in the Andalusia region.

The seasonal farm workers will soon be arriving in Spain upon the invitation of the local Spanish officials who expressed preference for Filipino workers over other nationalities, said Angara.

With reports from Abigail L. Ho and Amy R. Remo

Travelling solons on their own

By Christine O. Avendaño, Norman Bordadora and Christian Esguerra

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA yesterday said the decision of more than 30 congressmen to join President Macapagal-Arroyo in her European trip was their "own lookout," making clear that it was the lawmakers themselves and not the Palace which spent for the trip to France, Spain and the UK.

"As members of Congress, they have their own function, they have their own jobs, and if they think that they can undertake that is good for the nation and their constituents, leave it to them," Ermita told reporters.

He explained the many ways in which lawmakers end up becoming part of presidential visits, including the President herself personally inviting them because they head particular congressional committees and their presence is needed because of particular issues.

But often, many congressional members ask to be allowed to join and their inclusion is with the permission of the President and the House and Senate leadership, Ermita said.

He said some lawmakers "present themselves" because they feel they can be of help during the presidential trip, especially if the purpose of the trip is to promote business, he said.

A top House leader said the propriety of the congressmen making the trip was a personal judgment call on the part of individual lawmakers "as long as it's personal and no public funds were spent for them."

"This is a working state visit of the President and not a vacation as pictured in the media. I still think that joining this trip is not cause for alarm. The House still has the quorum to do business," said Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles.

House Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday said he tried to discourage the huge congressional delegation from joining the President's party because the chamber was working on the approval of many bills. .

But he was able to prevail only on Deputy Speaker Simeon Datumanong, Senior Deputy Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II, and Palawan Rep. Antonio Alvarez. The three congressmen play key roles in the passage of important bills before the Christmas break.

De Venecia said he did not have the power to stop legislators from joining the presidential trip as "they were traveling at their own expense."

GMA cited as rights champion

By Michael Lim Ubac

MADRID (VIA PLDT)—IN THE eyes of the Spanish people, President Macapagal-Arroyo is a staunch advocate of human rights despite the unresolved cases of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines.

The President was awarded the Medalla de Oro (Gold Medal) by the Alcala de Henares University late Tuesday for championing human rights.

University Rector Virgilio Zapatero praised Ms Arroyo for abolishing capital punishment in June 2006 and seeking international help last year to put an end to extrajudicial killings in the Philippines.

After accepting the award and taking her place at the seat of honor at the Paraninfo (Ceremonial Academic Hall), the President displayed the medal while a choir sang, "Hallelujah."

In her remarks, Ms Arroyo, who spoke in a mixture of Spanish an English, thanked Spain, the current chair of the rotating chairmanship of the European Union, for recognizing her efforts at defending human rights.

She said the Philippines was "the most democratic nation in our region," and that her administration had "no tolerance for human rights" violations.

"We deplore any and all killings of activists," she said, stressing that she had followed the recommendations of the Melo Commission, the fact-finding body she created to investigate the killings following criticisms by the EU and United Nations.

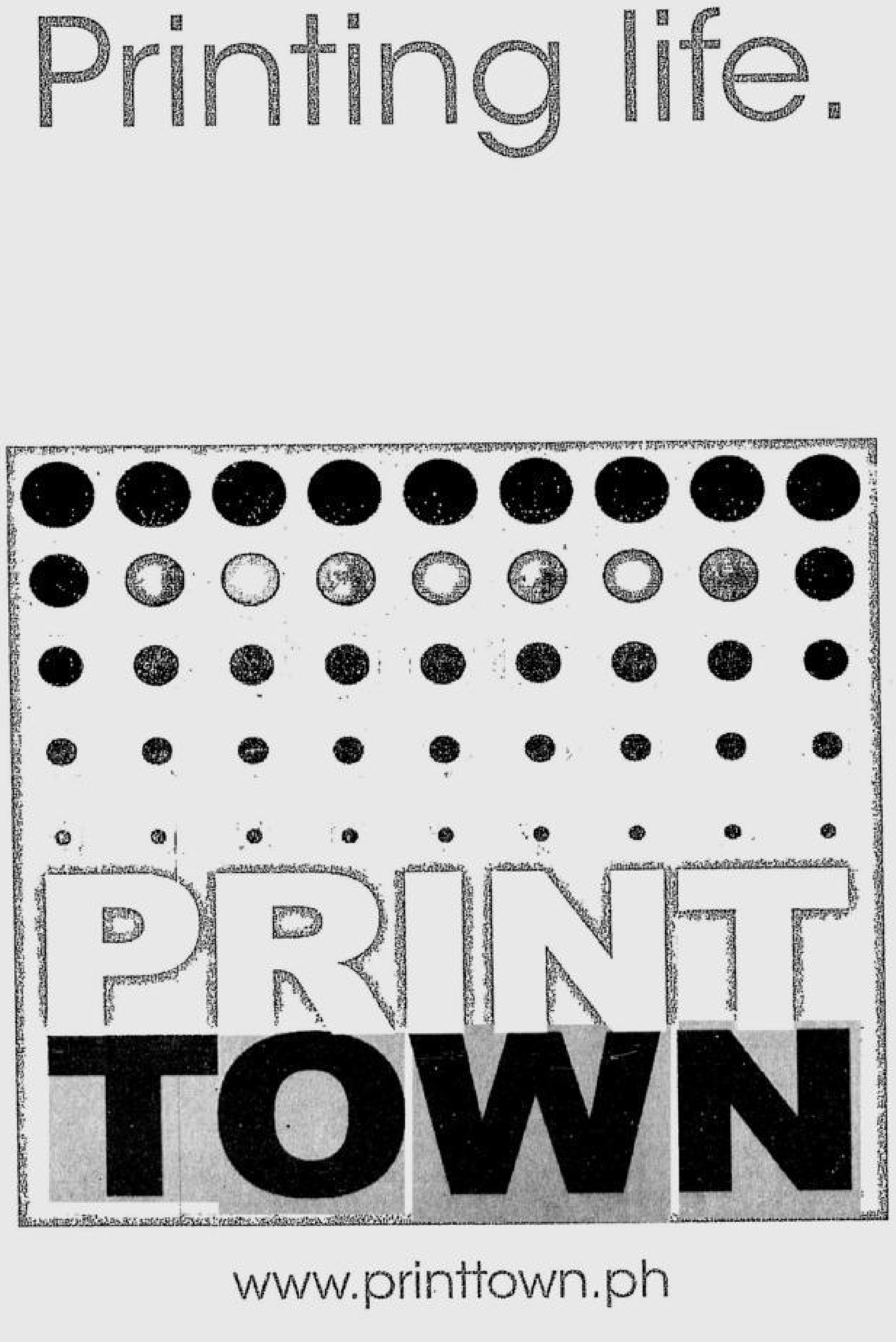
Ms Arroyo also reiterated her resolve to defeat communism, and enlisted the support of Spain to end the 38-year-old communist insurgency, saying the Communist Party of the Philippines was a "threat to the nation."

WHAT'S INSIDE

▨ **HOUSE BILL** on cheaper medicines losing steam /A5

▨ **CURFEW** declaration legal, says Ermita /A7

▨ **UNICEF REPORT** tells of abuse of women, kids /A7



DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)
Hiring of Services of an Energy Service Company (ESCO) or Energy Service Provider for the Retrofitting of DBP's Lighting System at the DBP Head Office Building, Makati City	P 15,000,000.00
Source of Fund: DBP Fund	
*Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.	

Contract Completion: 180 calendar days from date of receipt of Contract
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Requirement Documents	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of December 19, 2007 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents (Bidders are encouraged to witness the opening)	December 19, 2007 (Wednesday) at 9:30 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Issuance of Bid Data Sheet/ Scope of Work	December 19-27, 2007	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Pre-Bidding Conference (Eligible Bidders are encouraged to attend)	December 27, 2007 (Thursday) at 9:00 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Technical and Financial Proposals of Eligible Bidders	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of January 9, 2008 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Technical and Financial Proposals of Eligible Bidders (Bidders are encouraged to witness the opening)	January 9, 2008 (Wednesday) at 9:30 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

DBP calls for the submission of Letter Of Intent (LOI) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the above project. **Prospective Bidders should be an Energy Service Company (ESCO) or Energy Service Providers who are ISO Certified and possess a valid PCAB license (Electrical)** and must have projects/contracts within the last five (5) years with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Requirements Documents. Interested bidders must submit their Letter Of Intent (LOI) and accomplished Eligibility Documents: **"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of December 19, 2007 (Wednesday) at the BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City.**

Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis and only those Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.

The contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who will be determined as such during the post-qualification. Interested parties may secure the Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City or you may download these forms at www.devbankphil.com.ph and at the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. **A non-refundable fee of Php10,000.00 will be charged to all eligible bidders.**

The eligible bidders are advised to check the Bank's website and the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PHILGEPS) for bid bulletin and announcements regarding the project.

The Development Bank of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call Telephone Numbers 8125702/8189511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI—Dec. 6, 2007)

Batasan blast suspect tortured, solon claims

ANAK MINDANAO REP. MUJIV HATAMAN has charged police with torturing a suspect who allegedly linked him to the bombing of the House of Representatives last month.

Five persons died in the Nov. 13 bombing, including Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar, who was allegedly the target of the attack.

In a privilege speech Tuesday night, Hataman said the suspect—former mayor of Tuburan, Basilan, Hajarun Jamiri—refused to affirm during a preliminary investigation at the Department of Justice that he pointed to Hataman and his brother Jim as the masterminds of the assassination of Basilan Rep. Wahab Akbar.

"Jamiri's relatives said he was tortured ... Even his genitals were electrocuted just so he would link me and my brother," Hataman said in his privilege speech at the House.

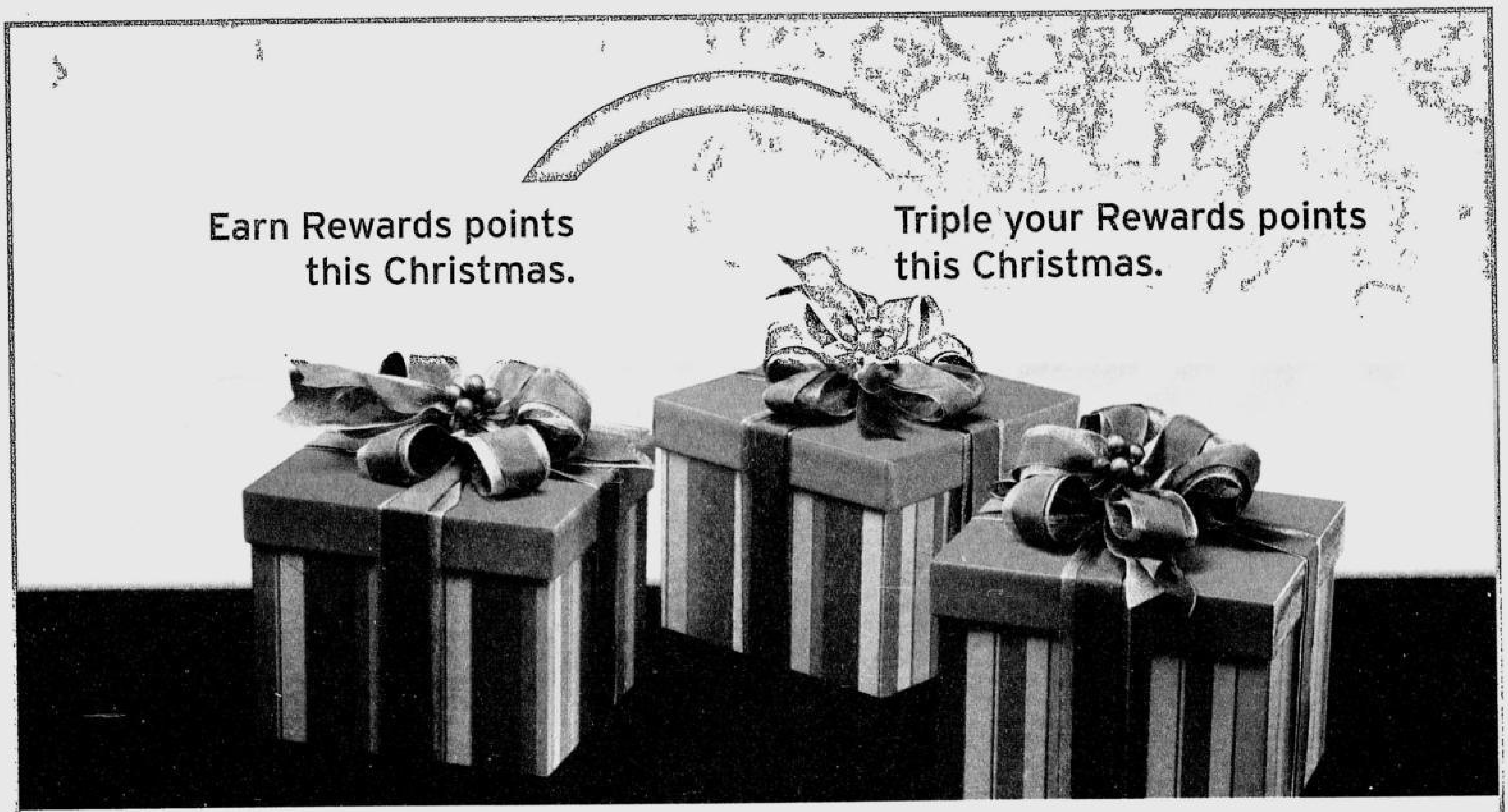
Jim Hataman lost Basilan's lone congressional seat to Akbar in the last elections. Mujiv Hataman, on the other hand, was a former ally of Akbar's but they had a falling out.

Police officials had told a House committee investigating the blast that the Hataman brothers as well as former Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin were implicated by the suspects in their custody.

"If they wanted the real perpetrator to be held accountable, why did they have to hurt a person to get the lies they need to have one person implicated?" Hataman said in his speech.

Sr. Supt. Asher Dolina, regional director of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Metro Manila, however, said "The confessions led to the hard evidence."

Norman Bordadora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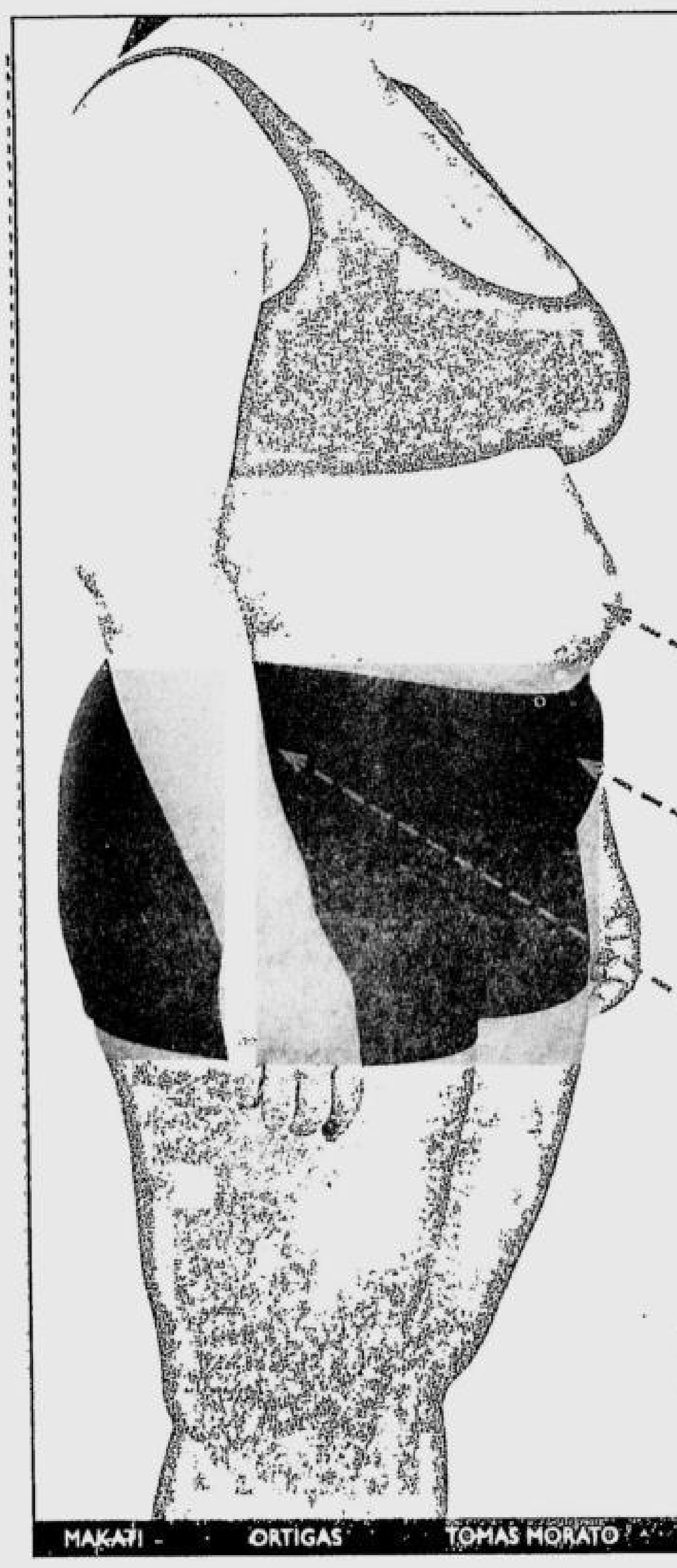

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Sandigan stops seizure of Erap assets

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SANDIGANBAYAN YESTERDAY temporarily stopped the confiscation of the personal properties of convicted plunderer ex-President Joseph Estrada pending the resolution of Estrada's motion to quash court orders for him to hand over more than P700 million worth of real estate to the government to satisfy the plunder judgment against him.

Justice Francisco Villaruz Jr., acting chair of the Special Division that found Estrada guilty of plunder last September, yesterday ordered Sheriff Ed Urieta to stop the confiscation during the oral arguments on the Estrada petition.

"After hearing the oral arguments, the court resolves that pending the resolution of the motion, the sheriff is refrained from issuing garnishment orders and levying [Estrada's properties] aside from those ordered forfeited in the decision," Villaruz said.

Reacting to the court order, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the defense panel was again resorting to tactics to further delay the implementation of the decision.

In its Sept. 12 decision finding Estrada guilty of plunder and sentencing him to reclusion perpetua, the antigraft court ordered the forfeiture of about P700 million in cash and property that Estrada illegally acquired.

About a month after the judgment, President Macapagal-Arroyo granted Estrada executive clemency on the ground that he was 70 years old but the pardon did not cover the forfeiture order.

The Sandiganbayan subsequently issued writs of execution directing Urieta to go after the cash and property and should Estrada fail to pay all or part of the obligation, the court also ordered the sheriff to seize other Estrada properties.

ESTRADA

Estrada contested this, saying that the orders went beyond the dispositive portion of the antigraft court's decision ordering him to return the P700 million.

Villa-Ignacio said that a general attachment earlier made to Estrada's assets was never contested or quashed by the defense, thereby allowing the court to go after Estrada's personal assets to satisfy the amount stated in the decision.

When Villaruz asked if, should the prosecution be able to identify bank accounts where money from the Jose Velarde account went, the court could forfeit these, Estrada's lawyer, Estelito Mendoza, said the court should strictly adhere to what it stated in its decision.

The Sandiganbayan decision said Estrada was Jose Velarde and the real and beneficial owner of the Jose Velarde accounts in the Equitable-PCI Bank (now Banco de Oro-EPCIB) where his ill-gotten assets were deposited.

The Sandiganbayan sheriff's office was recently informed by Banco de Oro-EPCIB that the Jose Velarde account, believed to have held P3.2 billion at one point, now has a maintaining balance of only P2,770.69.

Mendoza said the prosecution should have identified, earlier in the trial, the banks where the money from the Jose Velarde account were allegedly diverted.

This would have allowed the Special Division to become more specific in imposing Estrada's civil liability, he said.

But Villaruz said this would be contrary to the Section 6 of the Republic Act No. 7080 or the Plunder Law which states that "... the right of the State to recover properties unlawfully acquired by public officers from them or from their nominees or transferees shall not be barred by prescription, laches, or estoppel."

Appraisal of Naia3 stalls court hearing

By Julie M. Aurelio

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS TO DETERMINE how much the government should compensate the consortium that built the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 are stalled on the question of who should do the appraisal, and who should foot the $1.9 million bill for it.

At yesterday's hearing, government asked a Pasay City court to set aside a previous order directing government to submit all documents related to the appraisal of the multi-billion peso airport terminal built by the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco).

The Supreme Court had voided the graft-ridden Piatco contract in 2003 but a Pasay City court ordered the government to pay the German-backed consortium for work done after validating their compensation claims.

In an omnibus motion filed Nov. 13, government also reiterated its plea for Judge Jesus Mupas of Regional Trial Court Branch 117 to first resolve the issue of the appointment of an appraiser for the Naia3.

The court appointed the firm DG Jones to do the appraisal although another firm—Gleeds, Ove Arup and Gensler—had been previously contracted by government to help in the valuation.

The government claimed that they already submitted on March 19 papers such as bid documents, comments on the design, and a status report of the Naia3 as of February 2003. Other documents submitted included the concession agreement for the build-operate-transfer (BOT) arrangement between Piatco and the government.

"Clearly, the court overlooked the plaintiff's submissions," the omnibus motion said.

The government reiterated its earlier request to be allowed to produce the requested documents on "a rolling basis" or whenever the papers are available.

In June 2007, the government sought to recall the appointment of DG Jones, claiming there was no legal basis for the appointment as only an implementing agency, not the Pasay court, can "engage the services of private appraisers."

In another recent motion, the government, through Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera, also claimed that the $1.9 million appraisal fee quoted by DG Jones had no basis and that it was "provisional, speculative and unjustified."

P2-M GRAFT CASE

Sandigan clears ex-admiral

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS cleared a retired rear admiral of graft charges in connection with the allegedly irregular purchase of P2 million worth of medicines by the Philippine Navy 17 years ago.

The antigraft court's First Division dropped retired Rear Admiral Antonio Sibayan from the case in the absence of evidence proving his involvement in the procurement of allegedly overpriced drugs between 1990 and 1992.

Lack of merit

However, Sibayan's six co-accused will face trial for graft as the court dismissed their demurrer to evidence for lack of merit.

A demurrer is a pleading that even if the facts are as alleged by the opposite party, they do not sustain the contention based on them.

Not yet off the hook are Commodore Aristotle Guzman, Commander Florante Diaz, Captains Vicente Escala Jr. and Jesus Biola, Lt. Commanders Leonardo Gamboa, Augusto Iglesia and businessman Victoriano Chua.

The court also upheld the indictment of two other accused Navy officers—Lt. Colonel Roger Topacio and Lt. Commander George Segovia. Both did not file any demurrer to evidence, it noted.

Signature not in documents

The nine Navy officers are accused of falsifying documents such as the canvass proposals in the procurement of drugs from Chua's Porta Vaga Pharmacy, which were allegedly overpriced by P1.19 million.

In including Sibayan in the case, government lawyers said that it was Sibayan who recommended the approval of the purchase orders.

Sibayan filed a demurrer stating that his signature did not appear in any of the documents submitted as evidence, therefore failing to establish his participation in the dubious transaction.

The prosecution later moved to drop Sibayan from the case. But the Commission on Audit objected, maintaining that the charge against him was "amply supported by evidence."

Absence of evidence

The court ruled that Sibayan had correctly pointed out that none of the documents showed his participation in the transaction.

"In view of the complete absence of evidence, both testimonial and documentary, to prove [Sibayan's] liability for the crime charged ... there remains no further reason to hold him for presentation of evidence," the court ruled.

But in junking the demurrer filed by the rest of the accused, the court said the arguments they raised would be "best appreciated" in their presentation of evidence.

It said that in their case, the prosecution presented sufficient evidence to support the indictment. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

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Corrections

IN THE DEC. 4 ISSUE, a front-page article—"37 lawmakers join GMA party; who's paying for their trip?"—misstated that 37 legislators were joining the President in her visits to France, Spain and the United Kingdom. Not all the lawmakers will visit the three countries.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a sidebar on Page A13—"List of lawmakers in the President's trip to Madrid, Spain"—mistakenly included the names of the following representatives—Simeon Datumanong of Maguindanao, Antonio Alvarez of Palawan, Rodolfo Antonino of Nueva Ecija, Rodolfo Albano III of Isabela and Ann Tan of Western Samar.

* * *

IN THE DEC. 4 ISSUE, an article on Page A2 — "Batasan blast suspect out on bail" — misspelled the first name of one of the suspects in the Batasan bombing on Nov. 13. The suspect is former Mayor Hajarun of Tuburan, Basilan,— not Hadjarun — Jamiri.

* * *

THE SAME ARTICLE misstated the charge for which Jamiri recently posted an P80,000 bail bond. The bond was for the charge of illegal possession of firearms — not murder and frustrated murder. Jamiri is still undergoing preliminary investigation on charges of murder and frustrated murder.

Naia tightens upon human trafficking

IMMIGRATION CHIEF MARCELINO Libanan has ordered immigration officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport to strictly scrutinize the travel documents of departing Filipino tourists following reports that human traffickers have been using fake tickets to smuggle undocumented workers abroad.

The immigration officers at the Naia and other airports must ensure that the return tickets of Filipinos traveling as tourists are genuine before they are allowed to board their flights, Libanan said.

"Passengers with fake return tickets should not be allowed to leave as it indicates that such travelers are not legitimate tourists but are contract workers or job seekers disguised as tourists," he said.

Tickets that appear to be fake or tampered with should be referred back to the airline concerned which can check their authenticity, he said.

Libanan warned immigration officers who he said have been conniving with syndicates in facilitating the departure of passengers with spurious plane tickets that they will be suspended and investigated.

He said he issued the order after the Department of Foreign Affairs reported that some Filipinos have been jailed in Singapore for presenting fake electronic roundtrip tickets upon arrival. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

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(PDI—Dec. 6, 2007)

House bill on cheaper medicines losing steam

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE CHEAPER MEDICINES BILL IS LOSING steam at the House of Representatives.

The principal author of the measure yesterday said the number of congressmen supporting the bill had dwindled since it was revived at the start of the 14th Congress last July.

Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron declined to identify the names or exact number of his colleagues who have withdrawn their support for the old House Bill No. 1, the anchor bill of the current substitute measure being deliberated on in plenary.

But to be sure, he said the number was down from the original 186 lawmakers who had signed as co-authors of HB No. 1, which contained the highly contentious provision on drug price regulation.

"Perhaps a number of them had changed their minds," he said in a weekly media forum in Quezon City. "We'll know who they are when the House votes on the bill on second or third reading."

Against the bill

So what happened between July and December when the measure survived the scrutiny of the committee on trade and industry and was submitted for plenary deliberations?

Where lawmakers affected by purported lobbying by giant, multinational companies?

"We really don't know why they changed their minds," he told reporters. "They cannot really openly say that they are against the bill. They cannot say outright that it is of no value. Of course, (the withdrawal of support) will be done in a more subtle way."

Biron said a lawmaker's "change of heart" on the bill could be gleaned from a variety of questions raised on matters like constitutionality, free market, or violation of trade agreements.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, December 6, 2007
1st Week of Advent
Nicholas

1st Reading: Is 26:1-6
Gospel: Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Jesus said to his disciples, "Not everyone who says to me: Lord! Lord! will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my heavenly Father.

"So, then, anyone who hears these words of mine and acts accordingly is like a wise man, who built his house on rock. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house, but it did not collapse because it was built on rock. But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not act accordingly, is like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain poured, the rivers flooded, and the wind blew and struck that house; it collapsed, and what a terrible fall that was!"

Commentary

We are called to sing and open the gates of our dwelling place with God to let in the just, and make sure that our dwelling place with others is a place of peace and trust not only in God but in one another. Our God is with the lowly (those who do no violence) and he gives to the needy what others have kept from them unjustly. Our God walks in the footsteps of the poor and this is cause for rejoicing and singing!

Jesus cries out that if we are to enter God's kingdom now and for all time then we must make sure that we are doing the will of our Father. We have heard and have prayed the words for years, but do we practice the will of God? Do we prioritize the care of the poor and the needy, the coming of justice and the making of peace, the reconciliation of all peoples and the struggle against violence? Or are our lives built on sand?

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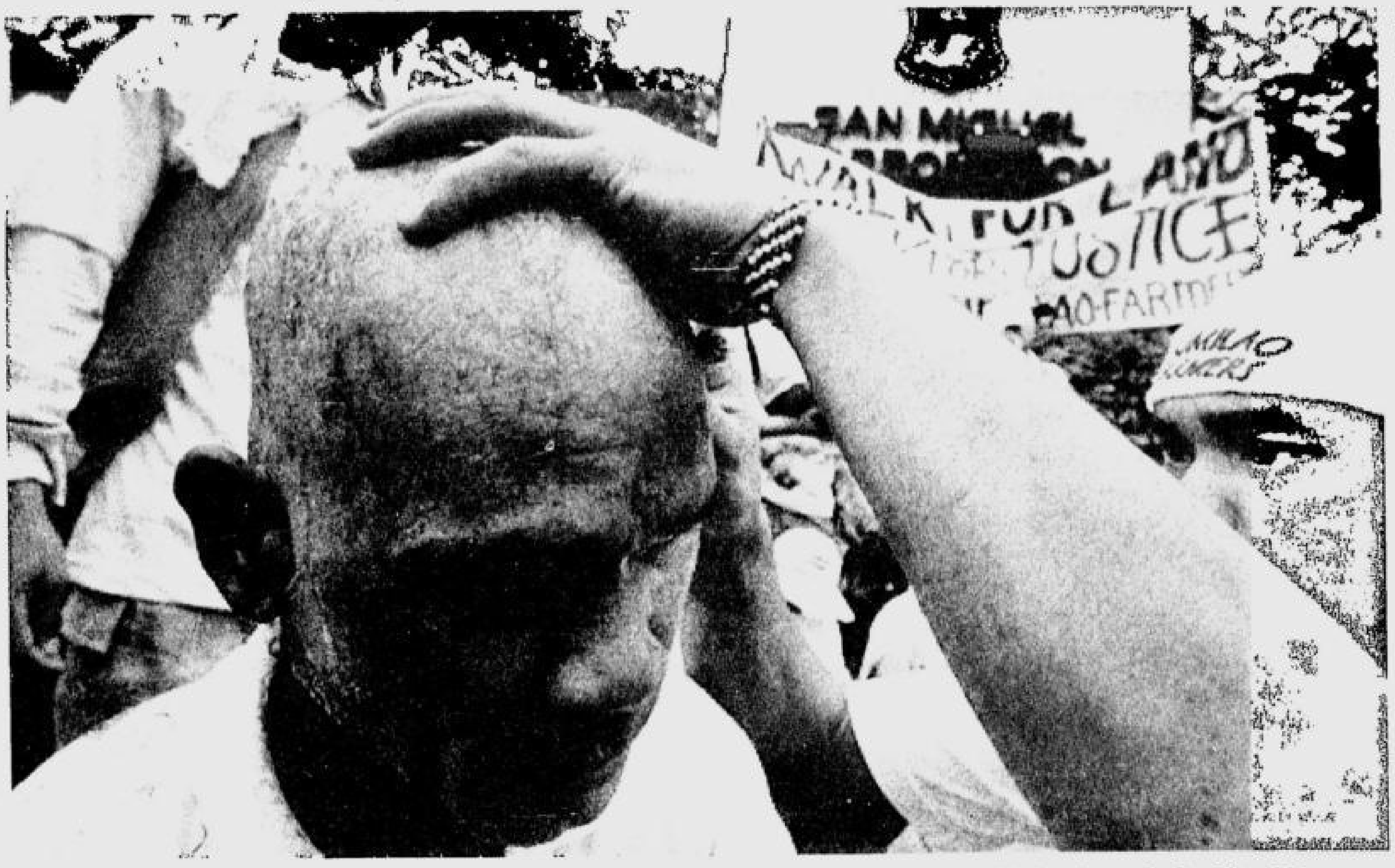
Church backs landless farmers of Sumilao

From page A1



CUT CLEANLY: The Sumilao farmers' "walk for land, walk for justice" campaign makes a stopover on Wednesday at the San Miguel Corp. headquarters in Pasig City, where they perform a Higaonon head-shaving ritual to signify that they had lost everything. JOAN BONDOC

vious owner, Norberto Quisumbing, who sold the land to SMFI in 2002.

In his homily in mixed Cebuano and English, Rosales said he was familiar with the farmers' plight and knew some of them personally. One of the farmers later came forward and embraced the cardinal in gratitude as the audience burst into applause.

Shaved heads

The 30 male farmers wore white kerchiefs on their heads, which they earlier shaved during a tribal ritual at the San Miguel Corp. office in Pasig City. "The shaving symbolized the fact that everything was taken away from them," said Heidi Fernandez, a member of one of the groups helping the farmers.

'Grand deception'

Yesterday, the farmers performed a tribal ritual in front of San Miguel's main office at the Ortigas Center in Pasig City to protest the company's "witting or unwitting participation in the mockery of agrarian reform."

One of the marchers, Napoleon Merida Jr., chair of San Vicente Landless Farmers Association, said San Miguel should not tarnish its image by being party to "a grand deception."

"SMFI is a respectable company. I hope it will listen to the cries of the farmers. We want our land back. Quisumbing violated the conversion order, so the land which was previously awarded to us should be given back to us," said Merida.

"I cannot really say how long it will take [for the decision to come out], but I assured the parties [that] it will be resolved soonest," Pangandaman said.

He denied that his department had been sitting on the issue. His office, he said, only received Malacañang's order and "voluminous" case documents on Nov. 22.

He asked the DAR's Center for Land Use Policy, Planning and Implementation, headed by Assistant Secretary Domingo San Andres, to come up with recommendations today so he could immediately issue an order.

On Tuesday, Pangandaman inspected the property and met with the farmers and administrators of the estate.

In Davao City, counsels of the farmers warned anew against delay in resolving their case remanded by the Office of the President to the DAR on Nov. 16.

Lawyer Arlene Bag-ao, executive director of the nongovernment group Balaod Mindanaw, said that although the recent Malacañang decision "is a highly welcome development," the counsels continued to be wary of "extra moves and processes" that could prolong a decision on the case.

The farmers said they planned to camp out in front of the DAR and vowed not to leave until Pangandaman makes a ruling.

SMFI is converting the property into a hog farm and has about 1,000 workers there.

The farmers have asked the DAR to issue a cease-and-desist order and issue a notice of agrarian reform coverage for the land.

'Unassailable' facts

In the press conference, Pangandaman cited several "unassailable facts" that would guide him in his decision.

First is that the original conversion of the land, approved by Malacañang in 1996 and upheld by the Supreme Court in 1999, still stands even if the Supreme Court did not recognize the legal standing of the farmers regarding the conversion.

The secretary said his inspection tour confirmed the farmers' claims of ongoing development works which "are far different from what are stated in the conversion order" approved by the Supreme Court.

Five buildings have already been constructed, he said. Two are furnished with feeding devices.

The original conversion plan called for the establishment of a development academy, a cultural center, an institute for livelihood science, a museum, library, golf course, a sports development complex, an agro-industrial park, forest development and support facilities, and construction of a 360-room hotel, restaurant, housing projects and others.

The DAR's legal counsel, however, said the law that created the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) did not state that a new owner of a disputed property was bound by the conversion pledges made by the previous owner.

The farmers quoted DAR rules stating that the landowner had five years to undertake the development. This time limit lapsed in 2004, they said.

Pangandaman, however, said the five-year period started when the development permits were issued by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board. San Miguel's lawyer Wildredo Penaflor was quoted by the secretary as saying these were issued only in 2004.

Sold, bought in 'bad faith'

Marlon Manuel, the farmers' lawyer, said the property was sold and bought in "bad faith," adding that there was a strong basis to contest the validity of the sales transaction between Quisumbing and SMFI.

"SMFI could not have been unaware that the piece of prime agricultural land that it bought was bound by a development plan with a specific five-year completion period required by law. As buyer, it could not claim innocence to the previous owner's obvious intent to evade the agrarian reform law through a conversion plan that had not even taken off when the sale took place," Manuel told reporters.

SMFI said earlier that it bought the land in good faith and that it had a clean title for the property.

Malacañang has asked police and military authorities and local government officials to look after the marching farmers.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said he had issued a memorandum to ensure that the farmers would be safe from accidents or even illness.

Palace hands off case

"Let's see how this will be handled by the Department of Agrarian Reform," he said, reminding anew that the Office of the President was hands off in this case because it was "not a trier of facts" and that it was the DAR that would "tell us the details of what they are clamoring for."

The farmers will proceed to the DAR office tonight after going to Chino Roces (formerly Mendiola) Bridge in Manila and the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City for brief pickets.

Last night, they were scheduled to sleep at the Loyola Heights campus of the Ateneo

With reports from Ryan D. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao, and Christine O. Avendaño

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24 'surprised' Makati cops axed; Binay mad

From page A1

"If the policemen were surprised, why should they be punished?" Binay said, noting that it should be Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, the Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, who should be investigated for being unprepared.

Binay said that Esperon knew about the destabilization plan but did not act on it or passed the information to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Some of the Makati policemen earlier said that they did not want to take action on Trillanes's group after seeing some of them were armed and feared that a gun battle could hurt bystanders.

Ordered relieved was Sumulong, who was the officer in charge of the Makati police as the chief, Supt. Gilbert Cruz, was out of the country attending a seminar.

Apparent inaction

The PNP said the "apparent inaction" of the policemen in the opposition bailiwick to "control the situation" allowed Trillanes to walk out of the courtroom and march on the hotel located three kilometers away.

Binay vehemently denied that he was involved in the botched coup d'etat plot and added that he was ready to answer questions from government investigators looking into the incident.

He said he was with former President Joseph Estrada in Quezon City for a medical mission at that time.

Binay slammed Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez for insinuating that he had a hand in the plot because one of his men was with the rebel soldiers. Binay said the allegation was unfair.

Negligence

The mayor said he provided the police information on one of the rebels who wore a wig as a disguise, referring to ex-Sgt. Elmer Colon.

Supt. Rommel Miranda, deputy PNP spokesperson, said that those relieved had been ordered to report to the Southern Police District (SPD) headquarters to undergo investigation.

He said that the investigation was for possible administrative charges of negligence. If charged, the policemen could be placed under preventive suspension and deprived of their salaries.

"The first action (to stop Trillanes' group) should have come from these people. Negligence in this situation is of grave magnitude," Miranda added.

He also said that it took 30 minutes from the time Trillanes left the courtroom of Makati City Judge Oscar Pimentel before Makati City policemen were able to inform their superiors of the situation.

"There is no excuse for that," Miranda said.

He said the group would be temporarily assigned to the Headquarters Support Group of the SPD pending the result of the investigation.

Other policemen relieved were Insp. Geraldo Diño, SPO3 Carlos Mendibei, and PO3 Edwin Buenaventura of the City Hall Detachment; Senior Insp. Reycon Garduque, PO2 Rommel Salcedo, and PO1 Globel Belarmino of Police Community Precinct 8; SPO1 Noel Infante, PO1 Wilfredo Alvarez and PO2 Raul del Rosario of the Mobile Patrol Unit; Senior Insp. McVernon Manera, PO2 Reyne Baluyan and PO1 Bryan Hernandez of the Intelligence Division; SPO1 Enrique Fernandez and PO2 Jomerick Turiano of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit.

Also relieved were Traffic Division personnel Senior Insp. Gilberto Loteria, Insp. Oscar Alicando, SPO4 Antonio Buctuan, SPO1 Mano Deveza, SPO4 Ronando Pilande, SPO2 Rogelio Valdenor, SPO1 Melchor Calooy, SPO3 Nestor Frias, and PO3 Luisito Ordoñez.

Magdalo dry run for escape dries up; soldier nabbed at Naia

From page A1

the Ninoy Aquino International Airport carrying his passport with a valid US working visa. He got the visa just two days before the hotel incident last Thursday and was going to America to work as a life guard.

But the person who was to hand him his ticket for the Northwest Airlines flight 72 scheduled to depart at 6:42 a.m. bound for Washington, DC, was nowhere to be seen.

Instead, a team from the Philippine National Police-Aviation Security Command pounced on him and took him into custody in front of relatives who were seeing him off, according to a police officer who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

Info on escape

Celestino's arrest foiled the plan for the escape of Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon to flee the country, the officer said. Faeldon, along with Celestino and two other officers, disappeared after the standoff ended seven hours later. A P1-million reward has been put up for the capture of Faeldon.

Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said that the arrest of Celestino was a result of a "case buildup" and intelligence information gathered by police and the military.

"We had information that Celestino will be attempting to get out of the country and we monitored this. We got his flight details and this resulted in his arrest," said Bacarro, the Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson.

Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-National Capital Region (CIDG-NCR), said Celestino had been spotted at the Makati regional trial court on Thursday.

There, Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, a former Navy lieutenant who led the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, former Scout Ranger Regiment commander accused in a February 2006 coup attempt, walked out of the court proceedings on the 2003 Oakwood mutiny and sparked the Peninsula standoff.

Hotel takeover plan

Trillanes, 36, Lim, 52, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona, 79, Bishop Emeritus Julio Labayen, 81, and 32 other civilians have been charged with rebellion in connection with the Peninsula incident.

FLIGHT RISK: PFC Arvin Celestino admits to being a Magdalo member when caught at the Naia to board a plane for Washington, DC to work as a lifeguard. He's shown here being interrogated inside the CIDG office in Camp Crame. JOAN BONDOC

"We know for a fact that he (Celestino) was at the Makati RTC, on the ground floor of the City Hall and the Manila Peninsula. And I'm sure those who of you who covered that saw him there," Dolina told reporters in Filipino.

Dolina said that following his arrest, Celestino admitted that he was at the hotel takeover. "I asked him if he was there and he said 'Sir, I was with the other reporters in the Manila Penn'."

Dolina also said Celestino's name was on a document recovered by police that detailed the groupings of the rebel soldiers, their itinerary and their respective tasks.

Member of team 3

According to the document, a copy of which was furnished to the INQUIRER, Celestino was a member of Team 3, one of four teams formed for the failed revolt.

"These teams are composed of active and discharged military personnel and their commonality is that they were involved in the Oakwood mutiny," Dolina said.

Team 3 was to secure the elevator used by Trillanes to go down from the 14th floor of Makati City Hall building and the ground floor.

Celestino was turned over to the CIDG for processing and later to the Department of Justice for preliminary investigation on rebellion charges.

Dolina later presented Celestino to media. He was wearing a black shirt and jeans but was not handcuffed. He was not allowed to talk to reporters.

Police late yesterday filed a rebellion complaint against Celestino before the Department of Justice.

Celestino was a member of the Magdalo soldiers who staged the short-lived Oakwood mutiny in Makati on July 27, 2003. He was among 184 enlisted men who were demoted two ranks and reinstated in the service after a plea bargain in May 2005.

With a report from Leila B. Salaverria

Curfew declaration legal, says Ermita

By Christine O. Avendaño

ERMITA

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO Ermita yesterday defended the decision of President Macapagal-Arroyo to impose a five-hour curfew following the Peninsula Manila standoff on Nov. 29.

Responding to reports that the Senate plans to question the midnight-to-dawn curfew because it was imposed even without the declaration of a state of emergency, Ermita said this was perfectly within the emergency powers of the President.

Ermita said the Constitution vests the President with six emergency powers, including "impairment of the right to travel or the imposition of curfew."

He cited a Supreme Court ruling (Sanlakas versus Executive Secretary), that said "there is no need for a formal declaration of rebellion or national emergency by the President."

The court stated that in calling out such powers, the only criterion is "whenever it is necessary ... The president may call out the armed forces to suppress rebellion or invasion ... when she thinks it becomes necessary," Ermita said.

Ermita said what happened on Nov. 29 was "a national emergency."

On the position of some senators that President Arroyo had to get Congressional approval before she could use her emergency powers, Ermita conceded that there was a provision in the Constitution that stated "in times of war or other national emergency, Congress by law can authorize the President for a limited period of time subject to such restrictions, to exercise powers necessary."

But he said the high court had ruled that the President can declare a state of national emergency or rebellion by drawing on her powers as chief executive and commander in chief.

The Constitutional provision did not specifically say that the President should get authority from Congress to declare a national emergency, Ermita said.

"So the logical conclusion is that President Arroyo can validly declare a national emergency even in the absence of Congressional enactment," Ermita told reporters.

Unicef report tells of abuse of women, kids

By Beverly T. Natividad

A MOTHER IN CAPIZ RECOUNTED HOW soldiers went to her house and, in between gambling, tortured her eight-year-old son so he would tell them what he knew about the communist New Peoples' Army (NPA).

"They held and dangled him by his head and said that if he didn't tell the truth, they'd separate his head from his body," she said in Filipino.

This is only one of thousands of stories of women and children caught in the middle of armed conflict compiled by researchers of the United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Another story tells of Nahla, an 11-year-old girl from Maguindanao, who recounted how she and her eight-year-old sister were not able to enroll in school because their school report cards and birth certificates were lost when the soldiers burned down their house.

Launching its report entitled "Uncounted Lives: Children, Women and Conflict in the Philippines," UNICEF said it hopes this story as well as the overall situation will bring renewed focus on this sensitive subject.

"We hope the controversial research will provoke vigorous debate about the problem," said UNICEF Representative Dr. Nicholas K. Alipui.

The report focused on the number of women and children displaced by the armed conflicts in Abra, Mindoro Oriental, Capiz, Leyte, Surigao del Sur, Compostela Valley, North Cotabato, and Maguindanao.

The research team was composed of the IBON Foundation, the Children's Rehabilitation Center and the Center for Women's Resources.

Alipui said they are set to bring the information to the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to seek the government's response.

"This was an independent research of people who went behind the frontlines but there was no chance for the AFP and PNP to conduct some assessment and make their rebuttal. This is only half of the story," said Alipui.

He added that many people have become "too complacent" and "accommodating" to the fact that many Filipino children are now in the frontlines of insurgency in the rural areas.

"Children are not supposed to be engaged in armed conflict," said Alipui.

While the report presents no accurate statistic on how many children are displaced by armed conflicts in the Philippines, Alipui said, it is enough to know that children's lives are disrupted due to armed conflict when they shouldn't be. "The numbers are immaterial. One affected child is more than enough," he said.

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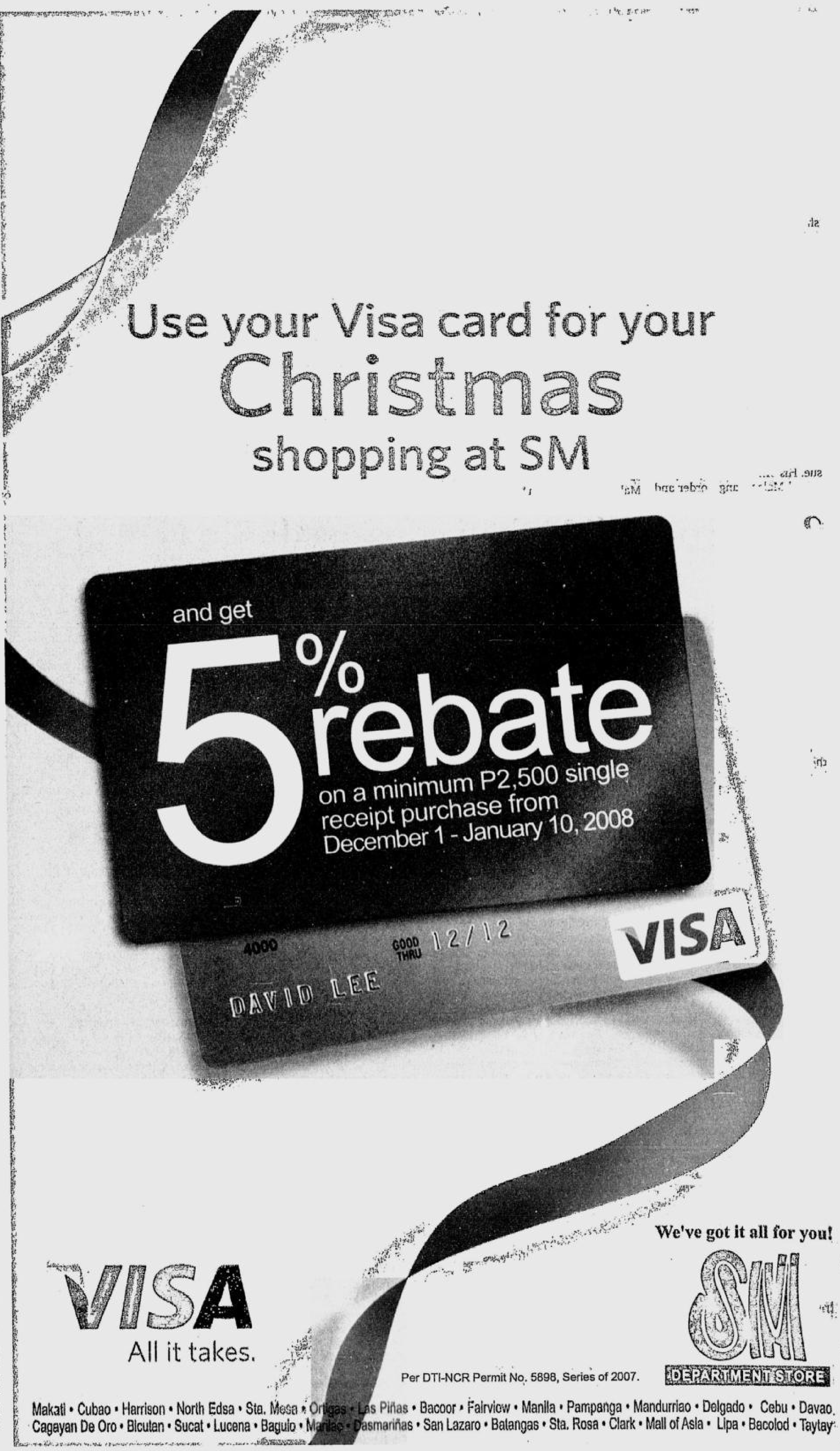

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HK 'DHs' hold prayer vigil for Fr. Robert's release

By Blanche S. Rivera
Correspondent

HONG KONG—WHEN HE WAS in this haven of Filipino domestic helpers, Fr. Robert Reyes had women whom he proudly called his "DHs—divine helpers."

On their first day off work since Reyes was arrested in Makati City in the aftermath of the standoff between government troops and a rebel group at the Peninsula Manila, his "DHs" gathered at the St. Joseph's Church to pray for his release.

About 150 workers and parishioners lit candles during a prayer vigil on Dec. 2, calling on the Catholic Church in the Philippines to seek Reyes' freedom and immediate return to Hong Kong.

The Department of Justice has issued a hold-departure order on 36 soldiers and civilians charged with rebellion, including Reyes.

'He cared for them'

"Father cared for the people sitting on the streets of Hong Kong every Sunday. He would stop and talk to them … to sympathize in their despair and to accompany them in their search for God," read a statement from Buhay Ka and Lakbay Lingap.

Buhay Ka is a group of cancer survivors and their caregivers recently organized by Reyes. Lakbay Lingap is another support group for domestic helpers, also organized by the "running priest" who moved to Hong Kong early this year.

"How can a priest like that be dangerous and deserve to be detained?" they said, adding:

"Detaining him is depriving many of us the consolation of a friend, pastor and companion in our journey. We hope and pray that … Father would soon be released and given the chance to come back to us."

VIGIL FOR FREEDOM: OFWs in Hong Kong hold candlelight rites for the release and return of Fr. Robert Reyes at the St. Joseph Church, the OFWs anchor church in the former British colony. Father Robert has been charged with rebellion in the Trillanes escapade. DANTE PERALTA

But the two groups' request appears to be in for rough sailing, given the planned transfer of Reyes and the others to the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City for "security reasons." *See story on Page A1.*

Doing what he can

Danilo Reyes, a human rights worker and a good friend of the priest in Hong Kong, said that "whether his action was right or not, he is a reflection of us."

"A priest who was deprived of a parish, who became the subject of ridicule in the Philippines and even in Hong Kong, is doing what he can to remind us of the extent of the problem in our country," said Danilo Reyes.

Fr. Midas Tambot, another Filipino priest who leads the biggest parish in Hong Kong, said the problems in the Philippines were worsening because people did not get involved until their loved ones were directly affected.

Without naming Father Reyes, Tambot said there were others who could not accept what was happening in the country and so chose to be involved.

Buhay Ka's Evelyn Cabucos, who had initiated the vigil, said Reyes was "a priest [who] does not have a weapon."

"There are those who were released for humanitarian reasons. What about the others? They're also humans," she said.

Flutist arrived

Reyes had planned a retreat on Lamma Island this weekend for Filipino widows in Hong Kong.

He had invited the wife of a slain activist in the Philippines who now advocates peace and healing through flute music.

The flutist arrived; Reyes did not.

"I was expecting that he would return. But if he does not, it's a message for us to continue what he started here," Danilo Reyes said.

Guests return to The Pen less than a week after takeover

CLASSICAL MUSIC FILLED THE cozy lobby of Peninsula Manila's hotel Wednesday as operations went into full steam less than a week after a siege by mutinous soldiers.

"Our occupancy rate is now at 74 percent," Peninsula spokesman Mariano Andres Garchitorena told AFP.

"We are chugging along and in fact at the weekend will hold a benefit concert as part of our thanksgiving." He said only a few repairs were needed, including replacing the main lobby's glass-paneled doors, which were destroyed when police commandos rammed it with an armored personnel carrier and fired ammunition to arrest the soldiers last Thursday.

"Morale among the staff is high. Things like these only make us become closer," he said.

He declined to say how much the hotel had lost in the three days it was closed to the public, but said it was "substantial."

The Peninsula became the scene of a failed revolt by a small group of rebel soldiers who had smashed through a side door and laid siege for six hours, calling on the military and police to turn against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

They had burst in after storming out of a civilian court where they had been on trial for a failed mutiny in 2003.

All of the nearly 900 hotel staff and guests were evacuated hours before elite commandos stormed the building amid a flurry of gunfire and tear gas.

Built in 1976 as a symbol of the Philippine economy to coincide with Manila hosting an International Monetary Fund (IMF) conference, the 497-room Peninsula has over the years become a favorite of the country's elite.

It is known as the "jewel" of the capital's hotel circuit, serving politicians, power brokers and those who matter on the Philippine social scene.

On Wednesday, policemen returned, wearing Santa Claus outfits for a peace dialogue with journalists, who had been arrested for covering the siege but later freed.

In the lobby, guests lazily sipped coffee in a relaxed atmosphere. And Garchitorena added that within six weeks—once the stained carpets and smashed glass doors are replaced—the popular hotel will be back in pristine condition. *AFP*

The Pen or the Sword? ABS-CBN news execs claw at gov't officials in dialogue

From page A1

were amended, journalists refusing to heed police "requests" to vacate an area of conflict would continue to be arrested.

"It was not the coverage that was the problem, but the physical presence of the media that caused obstruction [of justice]," Puno also said.

Some 30 reporters, cameramen and technical crew were hauled to Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan along with Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, former University of the Philippines president Francisco Nemenzo and others who called for a change in government leadership during the seven-hour revolt.

Adversaries

The two-hour dialogue was organized by Malacanang and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters sa Pilipinas (KBP). But it was not the first post-crisis exchange between the media and an administration beset by coup attempts and such.

Malaya publisher Jake Macasaet said this was not unexpected as the media and the government were "classical adversaries."

"It is when they come to terms that we should worry. That is the end of democracy," Macasaet said.

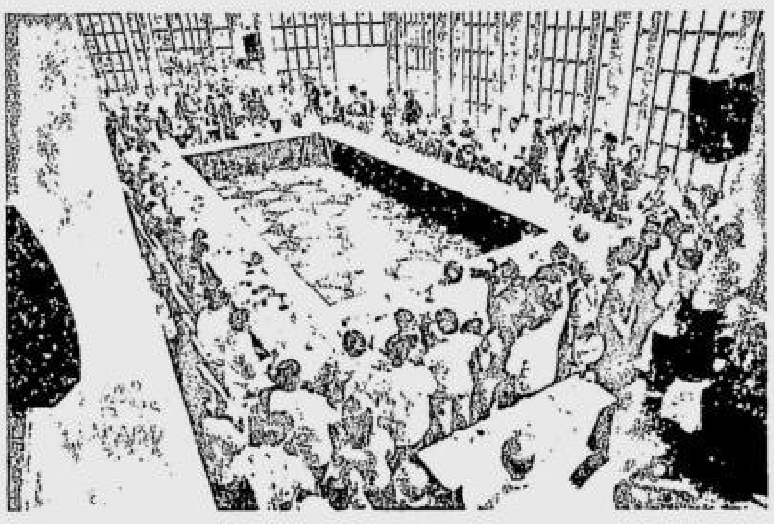
In the aftermath of the December 1989 coup attempt, the government also called for a dialogue after the military declared some journalists "threats to national security."

The role of the media in the August 1987 coup attempt was also questioned, with at least one journalist among those charged with rebellion along with the then coup leader, Lt. Col. Gregorio Honasan, now a senator..

In the March 1990 siege of Cagayan Gov. Rodolfo Aguinaldo, journalists were also trapped in a hotel with Brig. Gen. Oscar Florendo, who died in the shootout between government and rebel troops.

But the journalists were never called to task for being at the "crime scene."

Some newspaper columnists were also arrested following the coup attempt in February. But they were later released, along with the other alleged civilian supporters of purported coup leaders Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Col. Ariel Querubin.



SOCO: It's back to the scene of the crime on Wednesday for the media-AFP-PNP dialogue mediated by heads of the Kapisanan ng Broadcaster ng Pilipinas at the Peninsula. LYN RILLON

Radio-TV guidelines

As the dialogue was ongoing, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita was reminding the media of a memorandum circular barring radio and television from airing propaganda, comments and interviews of rebels and terrorists.

At his weekly news briefing, Ermita fished out Memo Circular 22-89, which was signed exactly 18 years ago by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and contains guidelines for radio and television stations in covering events, including rebellion/terrorism acts.

The memo circular, an amendment to that issued by the NTC on Nov. 12, 1985, was issued during the Aquino administration, in the aftermath of the December 1989 coup attempt, according to Ermita.

He said the guidelines were issued at that time because the Aquino administration had by then survived seven coup attempts since 1986.

Ermita read the portion of the memo circular dealing with the coverage of rebellion/terrorism acts:

"Corollary to the above and in view of the current ongoing state of rebellion/terrorism, the following broadcast/telecast guidelines shall be strictly followed:

"a. The airing of rebellious/terrorist propaganda, comments, interviews, information and other similar and/or related materials shall be prohibited.

"b. The airing of government strategic information, including but not limited to government military locations, troop movements, troop numbers, description of government weapons, military units, vehicles and such other government tactical operations shall likewise be prohibited."

Franchises

Meanwhile, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said he had begun studying the franchise of television networks to know what other efforts the government could exert should a broadcast outfit refuse a police request.

Gonzalez said he was going to check what the networks could or could not do under the franchises granted them by the government.

"I want to see the limitations or possible violations that networks may commit based on their franchise. The airwaves are owned by the Republic of the Philippines. You get the franchise to operate," he told reporters.

Gonzalez said he wanted authorities to have an option should their requests be refused by the networks.

He said his move was intended to enable authorities to meet a need.

Asked about the possible chilling effect of such a move, Gonzalez pointed out that the franchises were public documents.

He also said he was not singling out any network. *With reports from Christine O. Avendano and Leila B. Salaverria*

DOJ supports Munti plan for Pen mutineers

From page A1

Gonzalez said the planned transfer to the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) of Trillanes et al.—who have been charged with rebellion in connection with their Nov. 29 takeover of portions of the Peninsula Manila—would address security concerns, and was "within the mandate" of the Bureau of Corrections (Bucor).

"There are people who are saying that even the maximum security area of Camp Crame (the headquarters of the Philippine National Police) is not safe," he said adding that a number of escapes had been pulled off there.

But the plan quickly drew criticism.

"They are afraid of their own shadow," said Francisco Chavez, lawyer of activist priest Robert Reyes, one of those charged. "You mean to say that the civilian security personnel of the NBP can do a better job than the Armed Forces of the Philippines or the PNP? That they would feel secure having these people inside? That, to me, is a very absurd reason."

Sen. Francis Escudero aired a similar view: "Transferring Trillanes [and company] from where they are now on the premise of security and safety is very absurd because they are already detained at the heart of the police force. If that is not a safe place at all, we should be alarmed.

"You only house death convicts and sentenced inmates at the [NBP]. Whatever law Trillanes and his co-accused may have violated, they are still awaiting trial. Why create an exception out of this case, which the government has been trumpeting as victoriously quelled?"

Not the first time

At his weekly news briefing in Malacanang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that if ever, it would not be the first time coup plotters like Trillanes and Lim were detained at the NBP.

He said the military officers behind the bloody December 1989 coup attempt against the Aquino administration were detained there.

Ermita said that while the planned transfer of Trillanes et al. was a matter for the court to decide, "it does not prevent President Macapagal-Arroyo from exercising such a prerogative."

He denied that the move was being undertaken to harass the accused. But he described Trillanes as a "recidivist," or a repeat offender.

Before his failed revolt, Trillanes was in detention for his role in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny. He is charged with the crime of coup d'etat and has yet to attend a Senate session.

Gonzalez likewise told reporters that Ms Arroyo had "the authority to transfer prisoners from provincial to national, et cetera."

Needs SC approval

If the trial will also be held at the NBP, the Supreme Court's approval is required, he said.

Gonzalez said a transfer of detention and trial had been implemented in the case of Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari, the former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, whose rebellion trial had been moved from Jolo, Sulu, to Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Should the planned transfer be approved by the Makati Regional Trial Court, a new facility may have to be built for Trillanes et al., Gonzalez said.

He said they should not be held together with convicts because "the danger is they might get killed."

Gonzalez reiterated that the NBP would provide the best security for the 36 accused.

He said they would "never" be able to escape if Gen. Ricardo Dapat, the Bucor director, would "take care of them in Muntinlupa."

Helpless, hopeless

But Chavez, a former solicitor general, said the planned transfer was in effect an admission that the police and military were "both helpless and, therefore, hopeless."

He said the plan was not only "oppressive" but also "a prejudgment of the case against them" because "only the accused who have gone through the full course of a trial and who have been convicted are transferred to Muntinlupa."

Chavez also said he would try to secure Father Reyes' release on recognizance.

He said the "running priest" was not part of any plan to unseat Ms Arroyo and appeared to have just chanced upon the siege of the Peninsula. *(See Box on Page A8.)*

Per Chavez's account, Reyes was to say Mass at the foot of the Ninoy Aquino monument on Ayala Avenue but was invited by Herman Laurel to the Peninsula.

At the hotel, Reyes wondered whether he should go inside, and was then asked to go with the group of Trillanes and Lim, who had called on Ms Arroyo to step down and on the public to join them.

"Is that rebellion? He (Reyes) could have left, but why should he leave? He wanted to find out what's going on," Chavez said.

Unnecessary cruelty

Escudero, a neophyte senator suggested that the government reassess security procedures in guarding detainees like Trillanes to prevent a repeat of the Nov. 29 failed revolt.

"These people have already been defeated, quelled, detained. There is no need for unnecessary cruelty," Escudero said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan also denounced the proposed transfer as another "overkill."

"We recognize the duty of the PNP to prevent a repeat of last Thursday's events, but this does not give the state reason to exercise its powers excessively," Pangilinan said, adding:

"In the Manila Pen siege, the media arrests were an overkill, the curfew imposition [from midnight of Nov. 29 to 5 a.m. the next day] was an overkill, and now this plan to transfer the accused to the NBP is also an overkill.

"While the accused are answerable to our justice system, this does not merit the oppressive and abusive treatment the state is giving them." *With reports from Dona Z. Pazzibugan, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño*

Opposition senators to visit Trillanes

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO PImentel Jr. said he and his colleagues in the opposition would visit Trillanes in his heavily guarded cell at Camp Crame.

"He is, after all, a fellow senator. We have to show that we care. As senators, we are one with him and our goal is that in the soonest possible time, he should get out and serve as a senator," Pimentel told reporters.

He said he expected Senators Panfilo Lacson, Loren Legarda, and Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III to accompany him in visiting Trillanes.

Legarda said she and her colleagues were making the visit on "humanitarian grounds."

"We want to see his conditions as a colleague. We may not agree with his actions, but we respect him as a fellow senator," she said.

Pimentel stressed that the visit did not mean that he and his colleagues were condoning Trillanes' latest effort to oust the Arroyo administration.

He expressed confidence that Trillanes would be allowed to serve as senator during Ms Arroyo's term.

"His recent actions might have complicated his situation, but he is not guilty until proved otherwise," Pimentel said.

Not Jamby

But one opposition senator, Jamby Madrigal, will not be among the visitors.

Madrigal, who had extended financial support to Trillanes' senatorial campaign, told reporters that she had spoken with the latter by phone and expressed disappointment over his actions.

"He should not listen to traditional politicians who are only using him," Madrigal said without naming names.

‘Big Bad News’ Barias: 3 disasters in less than two months in office

From page A1

than a month later, a bomb ripped through the entrance of the Batasan complex.

Then last week, the news that Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and his rebel pack had occupied the Peninsula Manila hotel hit him.

Less than two months in his post, and already he had three disasters on his plate. “I think I brought bad luck to the PNP Chief,” the 53-year-old Barias said with a laugh, referring to Philippine National Police Chief Avelino Razon, who took over the PNP helm a day before Barias assumed command of the NCRPO.

All in a day’s work

As the top cop of the most crime-prone region in the country, the PMA Class of 1975 member said it was all part of the job.

“It happens ... I never try to look at these incidents negatively,” he told the INQUIRER.

Barias has realized that the NCRPO post is high-profile one and that past national capital region police chiefs—like Vidal Querol, Edgar Aglipay and Razon himself—often drew lightning, whether they liked it or not.

A mere ‘provinciano’

“The NCRPO is very problematic. My predecessors had to get up early in the morning. But who knew Geary Barias before all of these? I’m just a guy from the province,” the Tuguegarao, Cagayan, native said, again breaking into chuckles.

Barias is no stranger to bad luck.

Before becoming NCRPO chief, he was police commander of Region 6 (Western Visayas) when the Guimaras oil spill and the communist rebel raid on the construction site of the Silay International Airport in Negros Occidental occurred.

Barias refused to see the glass as half empty.

“I was very lucky and very fortunate that the team that worked with me (in the three Metro incidents) were very good. In the Batasan incident, we had very good operatives that came out with the solution and arrests quickly,” he said.

“In the Manila Pen, we were lucky no one was seriously hurt or killed.”

The pugilist in him

By his own admission, the Peninsula incident brought out the pugilistic streak in Barias.

Stocky and built like a boxer, Barias admitted he hurled an expletive or two at Trillanes in frustration after the renegade officer was arrested.

“I said ‘Bullshit Mr. Trillanes! Do you think you have the monopoly of patriotism and love of country?’ I guess that was out of frustration—going there and staying there the whole day, trying to peacefully settle the matter, trying to stay cool, and being treated shabbily.”

Barias also admitted he slammed his cap in front of Trillanes in frustration.

Many TV viewers still carry with them the image of Barias being pushed back, shooed away by lower-ranking Magdalo soldiers, and being jeered by those in the hotel as he tried to end the standoff.

Sometimes, you retreat

But Barias said that was a “tactical” retreat.

“In war, sometimes you have to take risks to gain some tactical advantage,” he said. “All that pushing around really made my anger rise. But I made sure I acted in the proper manner. I knew that if they pushed me, it is they who would appear lowly in the public’s perception.”

Barias said he entered the hotel to gauge the temperament of the Magdalo soldiers and to case the place for a possible attack by government forces.

“I saw it in their eyes ... I knew they were confused,” he said.

Barias got his pound of flesh when Trillanes surrendered and the NCRPO chief hustled him out of his hotel by his trousers.

“I saw him as a plebe and he acted like a plebe,” he said.

Luck and God

Barias felt he came out the winner in his confrontation with Trillanes.

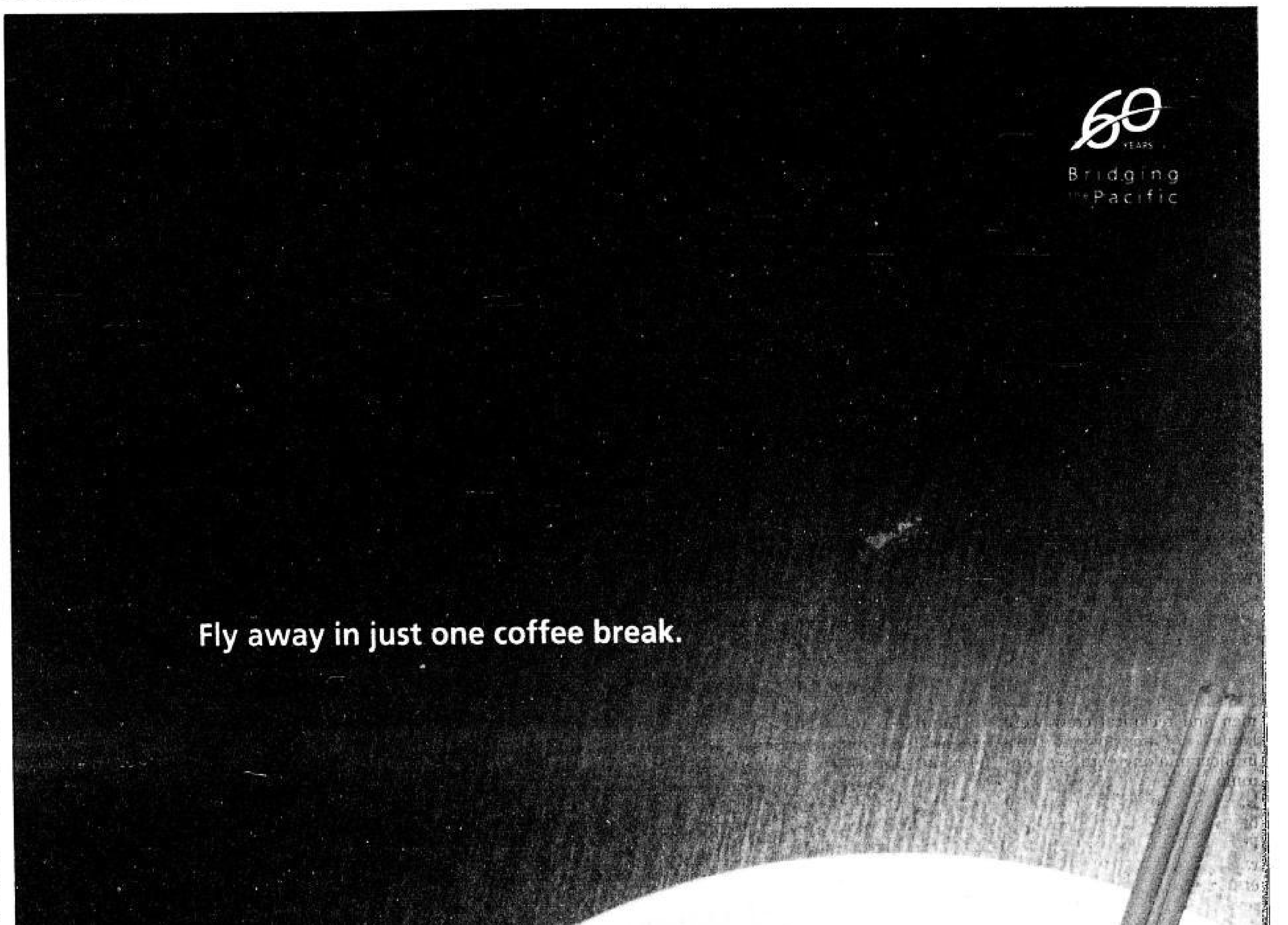
After yesterday’s press briefing in Camp Crame, Razon approached Barias and raised his hand in triumph, like a bloodied prizefighter after a brawl.

“In the end, you fall back on your training when you react to a situation. It’s all about succeeding in the mission with hard work. And I pride myself in really working hard,” Barias said.

“Plus you need some luck. That, you have to leave up to God.”

BARIAS JOLLY N’ NICE, or trying hard to be, at the media dialogue with the police. Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro gets into the act by using a napkin to beard the Metro Manila police chief. LYN RILLON

RESTRAINED: Police Director Geary Barias is stopped by a Magdalo soldier from entering the Peninsula, the scene of crime, at the start of the Trillanes occupation. REM ZAMORA



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National Capital Region
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cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
ALPHA TECHNOLOGY (PHILS.) CO., LTD. Unit 201 Alex House, 132 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Atsushi Tanabe Japanese	Sales Manager
JUST IN CASE SVCS CORP. Globe Telecom Plaza 1, Unit 615 Pioneer cor. Madison St., Mandaluyong City	Mang Jea Yang Korean	Supervisor
ANN SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 5/F Oppen Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Dae Soo Lee Korean	General Manager
CARRASCAL NICKEL CORPORATION Unit 201 Summit One Tower, 530 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	Xipin Zheng Chinese	Chief Finance Officer
INFLUX GLOBAL LINK CORP. Unit 3 LJ Plaza Bldg., BF Resort Drive, Las Piñas City	Paramjit Kaur Indian	Customer Relation Officer (Indian National)
INFLUX GLOBAL LINK CORP. Unit 3 LJ Plaza Bldg., BF Resort Drive, Las Piñas City	Gurmit Kaur Indian	Customer Relation Officer (Indian National)
SHINNITTETSU ENGINEERING PHILIPPINE BRANCH Unit 1503 Herrra Tower, V.A. Rufino St. corner Herrera St. Salcedo Village, Makati City	Takao Hayashi Japanese	Fabrication Manager
TAEYOUNG GOLF INC. Unit 1716 Makati Palace Hotel P. Burgos St., Makati City	Younghun Lee Korean	Assistant Manager
INFLUX GLOBAL LINK CORP. Unit 3 LJ Plaza Bldg., BF Resort Drive, Las Piñas City	Sharanjit Singh Indian	Asst. Supervisor
PHILIPPINES NATIONAL RAILWAYS PNR, Executive Bldg. Tutuban Mayhaligue Tondo, Manila	Noh Sung Kim Korean	Team Leader
INT'L. GOLDEN RESOURCES INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CORP. 1206 B West Tower, Phil Stock Exchange Road Ortigas, Pasig City	Jinling Bi Chinese	Manager
SAP PHILIPPINES INC. 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Manivel Kulanthaivel Indian	Consultant
AIRCON LAND TRADING & SERVICE CENTER INC. Suite 109, State Condominium V Guadalupe Viejo 452 EDSA, Makati City	Jonghyun Kim Korean	Manager
SAP PHILIPPINES, INC 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Pradeep Vijay Indian	Consultant
SAP PHILIPPINES, INC 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Ashish Kumar Srivastava Indian	Consultant
STANZA ALUMINUM AND GLASS CORPORATION 2709 Rizal avenue Sta. Cruz Manila	Zhi yong Cai Chinese	General Manager
SAP PHILIPPINES, INC 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Manoj Kumar Radhakrishnan Indian	Senior Consultant
SAP PHILIPPINES, INC 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Mukesh Kumar Indian	Consultant
KITPLAN PHILIPPINES INC. 302 Tower 2 Bayview International Tower Tambo Parañaque City	Kenichi Okujo Japanese	Chief Executive Officer
SAP PHILIPPINES, INC 32/F Citibank Tower, Citibank Plaza, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Srivatsan Tallam Madapusi Indian	Consultant
GREEN FINE AIR TECH INC. 108 Champaca Road Ext. Ups IV Sucat Parañaque City	Heesuk Yoon Korean	Marketing Manager
BAYVIEW TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 43/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Yuchen Zhu Chinese	Web Designer (jr. /sr.)
GREEN FINE AIR TECH INC. 108 Champaca Road Ext. UPS IV Sucat Parañaque City	Changkyu Oh Korean	Operation Manager
BAYVIEW TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 43/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Jingying Liu Chinese	Chinese Marketing Executive
OSG ASIA PTE. LTD. Unit LG 08 Richville Corporate Tower 1107 Madrigal Bisiness Park Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Seungwang An Korean	Sales Officer
CARRASCAL NICKEL CORPORATION Unit 201 Summit 1 Tower, 530 Shaw Blvd. Mandaluyong City	Junming Zhang Chinese	Sales Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI – Dec. 6, 2007)

Opposition solon urges Transco probe in House

From page A1

had been disqualified from the bidding despite an offer of $6 billion.

According to Guingona, La Costa is one of the biggest power firms in North America. He said its partner, SNC Lavallin, was "the world's second largest electric power player and one of Canada's largest corporations."

La Costa has gone to court to protest the auction, alleging "foul play."

Conflict of interest

The upcoming bidding has also been denounced in the Senate. Opposition senators said that there was "conflict of interest" in the process, pointing out that PSALM president Jose Ibazeta is a corporate official in the firm of one of the bidders.

Ibazeta has denied the charge that he was serving businessman Enrique Razon Jr. purportedly in the group of powerful businessmen that, according to Sen. Jamby Madrigal, included President Macapagal-Arroyo's brother, Diosdado Macapagal Jr., and the Aboitiz family.

"This country is about to witness a scam that makes the NBN-ZTE deal so trivial," Guingona said referring to the project that Ms Arroyo scuttled following allegations of overpricing and bribery.

Guingona cited a University of the Philippines study that showed Transco's transmission lines could piggyback fiber optics that could form the country's broadband backbone.

Communications backbone

"So why does PSALM keep talking in terms of one precious assets when it is actually selling two precious assets, to include a communications backbone," he added.

Two other lawmakers have been scheduled to take on the Transco bidding issue on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Makati City Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., was the first but he opted to get the side of Ibazeta and was told La Costa still had a chance to qualify for the bidding if it would only get a bank certificate that would show that even without its foreign partner it can come up with $300 million.

Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla had been scheduled to take on the matter last week but had to go on a trip to the United States.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF AFX-ASIA PTE LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the Directors of **AFX-ASIA PTE LIMITED** with Philippine registered office address at 5th Floor Kings Court II, Pasong Tamo cor. dela Rosa Street, Makati City resolved to dissolve and wind up its corporate affairs in accordance with law.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present the same at the above-mentioned address or at the resident agent's address at 5th Floor Don Jacinto Building dela Rosa Cor. Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

(Sgd.) **WILLIE B. SANTIAGO**
Resident Agent

(PDI - Nov. 29, Dec. 6 & 13, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
3rd Floor PCA Bldg. Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR) invites bonafide suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for **"Eleven (11) units Computer Desktop, One (1) unit Laptop and Fourteen (14) Units Fortigate 60 Bundle"** with an Approved Budget Contract (ABC) **Php 2,022,000.00**.

The Bid documents shall be available at the BFAR Property Section starting **December 11 to December 14, 2007** upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of P1,000.00.

Eligibility documents, technical and financial proposals in three envelopes must be submitted at the BFAR-BAC Secretariat, PCA Compound, Diliman, Quezon City not later than 2:00 p.m. on **December 20, 2007** and shall be opened at the Office of the BFAR-BAC Chairman, 3rd Flr. PCA, Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City, on the same date in the presence of the participating bidders.

For more information, please call the BAC-Secretariat at Tel. No. 425-3168.

BFAR reserves the right to waive any formality in the response to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. BFAR further reserves the right to reject any of all proposals, or declare a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JONATHAN O. DICKSON**
Officer-in-Charge, BFAR

(PDI - Dec. 6, 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

November 21, 2007

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation (RIZ-07-29492)

The scope of work shall include Supply of Labor, Tools, Materials and Equipment for the Repair, Testing, Installing and Commissioning of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation including Supply and Retrofitting of Electronic Winding and Oil Temperature Monitoring Device.

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION** (TransCo), through the Annual Corporate Budget of 2007 intends to apply the sum of **PHILIPPINE PESOS FORTY MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 40,500,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation. **Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected.**
2. **TransCo** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation.** The duration of the contract is **Seven (7) Months.** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

   Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last fifteen (15) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **TransCo** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.,** during working days starting **November 27, 2007.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of **PHP 5,000.00.** The method of payment will be on **cash basis only.** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **TransCo** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **December 6, 2007 at 1:30 P.M.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before the date and time specified in item 8 below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount specified in Clause 22, Section III, Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding documents or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **December 20, 2007 at 1:30 P.M.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
9. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the said address.
10. The bidding is also open to foreign bidders with eligibility requirements described in Clause 3 above and in the Bidding Documents.
11. **TransCo** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

MR. RICHARD D. NABONG
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department
Ground Floor, Power Center
National Transmission Corporation
Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road
1104, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Telephone No. (632) 981-2212; 981-2213; 921-23-08
Fax No.: (632) 921-23-08
Email Address: **rdnabong@transco.ph**
Website address: **http://www.transco.ph**

(Sgd.) **ATTY. NOEL Z. DE LEON**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Nov. 28 & Dec. 6, 2007)

ATTORNEY Gloria Allred (right) hugs her client Rita Milla, after discussing the settlement of Milla's lawsuit against the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles pertaining to her alleged sexual molestation by seven priests, during a news conference in Los Angeles on Tuesday. AP PHOTO

Woman abused by 7 priests gets $500,000 settlement

From page A1

with past abuse victims.

Milla first filed her case in 1984 after she said she was abused as a teenager by priests in the Los Angeles area.

"I'll never escape the memories and I'll always be fighting the after effects of the trauma I went through, but now I can work on healing," Milla said at a news conference on Tuesday.

A state court found in 2003 that a Filipino priest, Fr. Valentine Tugade, fathered Milla's daughter, now 25. Another Filipino priest, Fr. Santiago Tamayo, had admitted he had sex with Milla and publicly apologized years before his death in 1996.

The diocese refused to comment on Milla's case and the whereabouts of the remaining priests.

"We will continue our longstanding efforts to protect children, prevent sexual abuse and the potential for abuse," Cardinal Roger Mahony said in a statement.

Molested at 16

Milla has maintained that she was molested by Tamayo at a church in Carson when she was 16. After she turned 18, she said she had sexual intercourse with Tamayo who later introduced her to six other priests who also abused her.

After she was impregnated in 1982 by Tugade at a church in the Los Angeles area, Milla said Tamayo first suggested that she get an abortion, but later devised a plan to send her to the Philippines to have the child.

Milla returned to California after giving birth to her daughter, Jacqueline, and pleaded with the archdiocese for help but was refused.

Landmark malpractice suit

Milla and her mother then filed a landmark clergy malpractice suit in 1984, seeking to establish paternity, set up child support and sue the priests and Church for civil conspiracy. The California Supreme Court dismissed the case, saying the Church was not responsible for the behavior of its priests and that too much time had elapsed.

Even so, the Los Angeles archdiocese set up in 1988 a $20,000 trust fund for Jacqueline. Milla's lawyer, however, said her client's daughter was entitled to additional compensation.

On the day Milla sued 23 years ago, all seven of the accused priests disappeared from their parish offices, according to her attorney, Gloria Allred.

Tamayo relocated to the Philippines in the mid-1980s. In 2004, Allred released documents showing the Church urged Tamayo to stay in that country after Jacqueline's birth and mailed him checks.

In three letters dating from June 1984 to August 1988, Church officials advised Tamayo not to reveal the source of the payments "unless requested under oath," noting that he was "liable for personal suits arising out of your past actions."

No word with Tugade

Milla, now a medical assistant who lives in southern Los Angeles County, said that she had not spoken with Tugade since shortly after her return from the Philippines.

Tugade, who was last known to be living in Fremont in Northern California, never expressed interest in caring for the child, she said.

"He was disappointed actually that she wasn't a boy," Milla said.

She once planned to become a nun, but Milla no longer believes in God. She said she lost her faith because of the Church's callousness.

"I thought that the Church would make everything okay, that they would punish them," she said.

"After the Church showed me that they didn't care about what happened, I realized what they were really about, that they were more like a business," Milla added.

"They have no fear of God." *AP*

Gabriela solon seeks release of last Pen woman detainee

By Norman Bordadora and Leila B. Salaverria

LIZA MAZA

GABRIELA REP. LIZA MAZA yesterday called on the Philippine National Police to release the only remaining female civilian detained in connection with the Manila Peninsula seige.

Maza said the PNP was using the 63-year-old Myrna Hombrebueno Buendia to come up with a leftist-rightist conspiracy angle in the failed revolt led by Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim.

PNP officials are linking Buendia to communist party founder Jose Maria Sison.

"It is utterly malicious and chauvinist for the PNP to keep Myrna Buendia—a woman in her sixties and suffering from various illnesses—in their custody and use her as a pawn just so they can concoct their bankrupt left-right conspiracy theory," Maza said in a statement.

Maza said there was no reason for the PNP to further detain Buendia. "There is no conclusive evidence to support allegations of rebellion as well as her involvement in the Nov. 29 incident," Maza said.

Buendia's family asked Maza for assistance regarding her continued detention.

She is said to be suffering from diabetes, asthma, mild hearing loss, osteoarthritis and hypertension.

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals, concerned about a repeat of the walkout of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV at his Makati court hearing that preceded the failed revolt, did not direct the military to bring a military official to his own *habeas corpus* hearing yesterday.

"We did not direct you to bring the body of (Maj. Jason Aquino) because of the surrounding circumstances before the hearing. We wanted to avoid the scenario of what happened in Makati, that's why we did not direct you to bring the body. Anyway, the petitioner is ably represented," said Justice Ramon Bato Jr. of the appellate court's Sixth Division.

Soldiers incommunicado

Aquino is detained in a military camp in Tanay and facing court martial for his alleged involvement in the failed February 2006 coup.

The judge said yesterday's hearing was only a preliminary one. But he directed the military to bring Aquino to the next hearing upon the request of the officer's lawyer Francisco Chavez.

Chavez contested the absence of his client yesterday, saying it was the latter's constitutional right to be present at the litigation of his case.

Aquino's wife Maria Fe and six-month-old daughter Marie Francine were present at the hearing in the hope of seeing Aquino, who has been denied visitation privileges or held "incommunicado" since the hotel siege.

King, Moon sons coming for peace fest

THIS MONTH TWO internationally renowned peace advocates will be in Manila to join one of the largest peace festivals ever organized.

Drs. Martin Luther King III and Hyun Jin Moon are scheduled to address participants of the Philippine leg of the Global Peace Festival 2007 slated for Dec. 12, at the Quirino Grandstand of Rizal Park in Manila. Organizers said 250,000 will attend the festival.

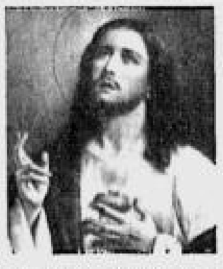
King is the son of American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and head of the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change. Last year he organized "Realizing the Dream"—taking off from his father's famous speech for a world of freedom, equality and peace among all men—which focuses on training programs for nonviolent conflict resolution, youth leadership and community-based economic development. King was likewise head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and had served as an elected commissioner of Fulton County, Georgia, USA from 1987 to 1993.

World peace

Dr. Moon is the Co-Chairman of the Presiding Council of the Universal Peace Federation which has organized the Global Peace Festival in Europe, Middle East and Asia this year. He is likewise President of the Youth Federation for World Peace, an organization dedicated to raising young leaders in public service through activities that contribute to bringing peace between peoples and nations. Moon is also chairman of the Washington Times Foundation and News World Communications which promotes the highest standards of journalism. The son of Unification Church founder Rev. Sun Myung Moon, the young Moon is also President of the World Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles.

Conferences

The five-day Global Peace Festival 2007 will kick off in Manila on Sunday with a series of conferences and events including a Manila Bay coastal cleaning at the Baywalk area along Roxas Boulevard; school cleanup activities with the Department of Education and assemblies and conferences for youth and educators at the Manila Hotel.



IMPORTANT

To the Devotees of the SACRED HEART OF JESUS. Tomorrow, December 07, 2007 is the FIRST FRIDAY of the month. **Novenas** and **Statutes** to the SACRED HEART OF JESUS and to ST. ANTHONY are given away FREE for Chapels, Hospitals, Schools, etc. Please get them from JASMINE at the Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City, MM or at Builders Centre Bldg. 170 Salcedo St. Legaspi Village Makati City, MM.

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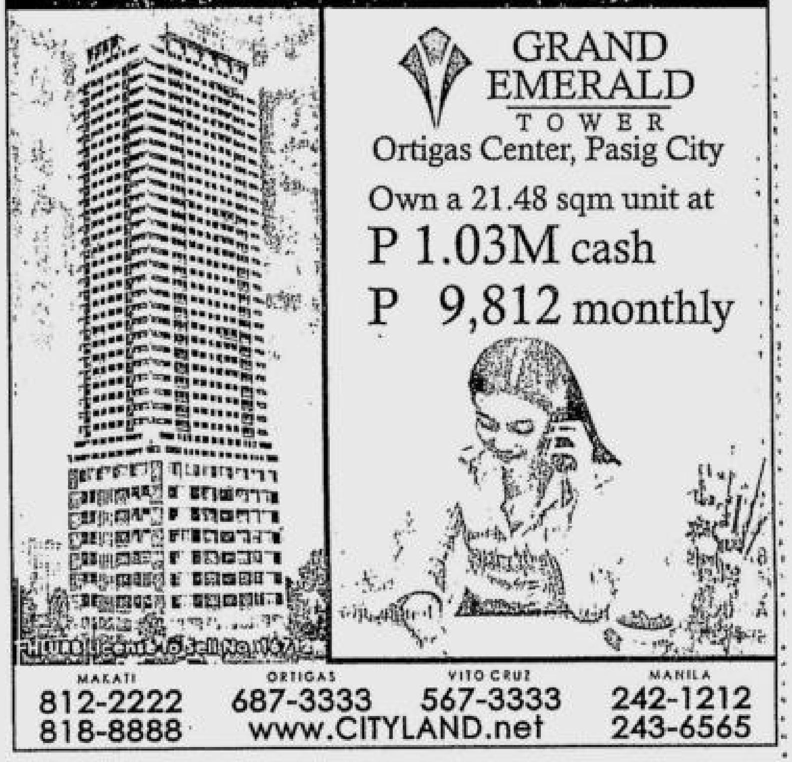

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Pinoy deported, banned from Bali

JAKARTA—A FILIPINO AND TWO other foreign activists who planned to travel to a UN Climate Change conference in Bali have been deported for violating their visas by attending a protest, an Indonesian immigration official yesterday said.

The trio gave speeches during Sunday's protest against plans to set up a waste incinerator near Bandung, the capital of West Java, said Nanang Kusdaryanto, from the province's immigration office.

"They were deported via Sukarno-Hatta airport in Jakarta yesterday (Tuesday)," he said.

The three activists—Gigie Cruz from the Philippines, Shibu Nair from India, and Neil Tangri from the United States—held tourist visas and these had been violated when they attended the protest, Kusdaryanto added.

The Jakarta Post daily reported that the three activists had been banned from attending the Bali summit, where representatives from nearly 190 nations aim to thrash out a new deal to combat climate change

Cruz, Nair and Tangri are members of the Global Anti-Incinerator Alliance (Gaia), an environmental network made up of more than 500 organizations in 81 countries. Cruz, 33, is also a volunteer for the Eco-Waste Coalition and Greenpeace Southeast Asia.

The three activists were on their way to Bali to host a forum titled, "Zero Waste for Zero Warming," to promote discussion on the strong connection between waste disposal and climate change, according to Gaia coordinator Manny Calonzo.

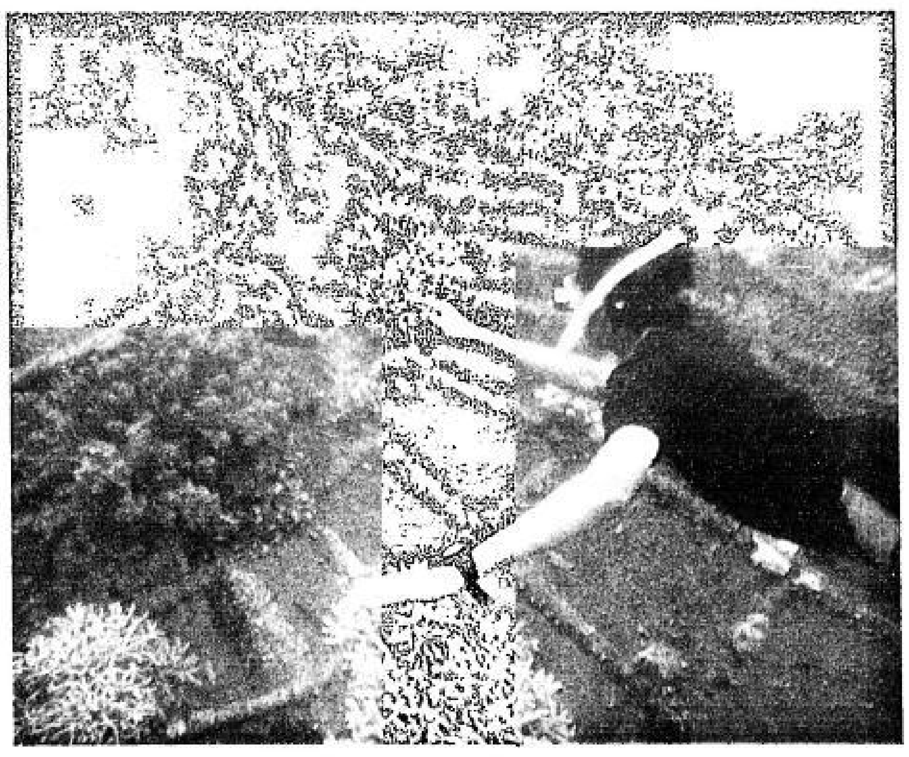
Cruz and her two fellow activists deplored the action taken by Indonesian authorities.

"We find it ridiculous that we are being deported from Indonesia for speaking out on waste and climate issues in a peaceful and nonviolent assembly of concerned citizens, since encouraging global public action to address the climate crisis is the whole point of the current UN Climate Change Conference in Bali," Cruz said in a communication sent to Manila.

"It was a case of criminalizing free speech ... It's in sharp contrast to the delegates discussing climate change issues in a free atmosphere in Bali," Calonzo said in Manila where Gaia is based.

"We thought it (deportation) was totally unjust to the team ... These environmental activists were in Bandung to share with community people their understanding of incineration issues and how this relates to climate change," he added.

About 2,000 people attended the Bandung protest, Calonzo added. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and AFP*



REPORTING UNDER WATER: A journalist inspects corals growing on a metal structure submerged by conservationists and fed by electrical cables linked to the shoreline in a bay in Bali. AP

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4. Each participant from the house category must choose his/her preferred charity partner from the list indicated in the entry form.
5. Two (2) filled out forms should be submitted along with a maximum number of 3 photos (printed 5R or digital) of the entry showing the lighted house/church/street.
6. Filled out entry forms should be submitted online or at the respective Meralco branches on or before 12 NN of December 8, 2007.
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8. For details and full mechanics, visit the website.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5752 Series of 2007. See posters and flyers for details.

Too many peo

From page A1

setting to Indonesia's resort island of Bali, from ministers to Nobel laureates to drought-stricken farmers.

But critics say participants to the United Nations conference are contributing to the very problem they aim to solve.

"Nobody denies this is an important event ... But huge numbers of people are going, and their emissions are probably going to be greater than a small African country," said Chris Goodall, author of the book "How to Live a Low-Carbon Life."

Interest in climate change is at an all-time high after former US Vice President Al Gore and a team of UN experts won the Nobel Peace Prize for highlighting the dangers of rising temperatures, melting ice caps, ever-worsening droughts and floods, heat wave deaths.

Massive conferences

Two massive climate conferences have been held in less than a month, both in idyllic, far-flung, holiday destinations—first Valencia, Spain and now Bali, Indonesia. The two conferences had been preceded by scores of smaller gatherings in Bangkok, Paris, Vienna, Washington, New York and Sydney, and places like Rio de Janeiro, Anchorage, Helsinki and the Maldivian island of Kurumba.

The flurry of international conferences is expected to pick up further, prompting some to ask if the issue has become a plague that is creating a "cure" industry?

No, according to Yvo de Boer, executive secretary of the UN Climate Change conference.

"Wherever you held it, people would still have to travel to get there," De Boer said. "The question is, perhaps, do you need to do it at all? My answer to that is yes."

"If you don't put the US, the big developing countries, the European Union around the table to craft a solution together, nothing will happen and then the prophecy of scientists in terms of rising emissions and its consequences will become a reality," he added.

47,000 tons of CO_2

The United Nations estimates that 47,000 tons of carbon dioxide and other pollutants will be pumped into the atmosphere during the 12-day conference, mostly in flights but also from waste and electricity churned out by air-conditioners at five-star hotels that line Bali's palm-fringed beaches.

The estimated carbon emissions during the Bali meeting would be equivalent to what a Western city of 1.5 million, like Marseilles, France, discharged in a day, according to De Boer.

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Australia finally
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BALI, INDONESIA—AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Kevin Rudd yesterday urged the United States to follow his country's lead and ratify the Kyoto Protocol, while rich and poor nations appeared divided over what a future climate change pact should look like.

Rudd signed documents this week to formall
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coral reefs get zapped with electricity, energized

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e Pemuteran reefs off Bali's northwestern shore were under serious assault by 1998, victims of rising temperatures and aggressive fishing methods by impoverished islanders, such as stunning fish with cyanide poison and scooping them up with nets.

"Under these conditions, traditional (revival) methods fail," explained Goreau, who was in Bali presenting his research at the UN-led conference. "Our method is the only one that speeds coral growth."

Severely limited

Some scientists, however, say the effort is severely limited.

Rod Salm, coral reef specialist with the Nature Conservancy, said while the method may be useful in bringing small areas of damaged coral back to life, it had very limited application in vast areas that need protection.

"The extent of bleaching . . . is just too big," Salm said. "The scale is enormous and the cost is prohibitive."

Others note the Bali project is mostly dependent on traditionally generated electricity, a method that itself contributes to global warming. Goreau himself concedes it has yet to attract significant financial backing.

Nonetheless, scientists agree that coral reefs are an especially valuable—and sensitive—global environmental asset. They provide shorelines with protection from tides and waves, and host a stunning diversity of plant and sea life.

Low-tech but unorthodox

Goreau's method for reviving coral is decidedly low-tech, if somewhat unorthodox.

It has long been known that coral that breaks off the reef can be salvaged and restored if it can somehow be reattached.

What Goreau's Bali project has done is to construct metal frames, often in the shape of domes or greenhouses, and submerge them in the bay. When hooked up to a low-voltage energy source on the shore, limestone—a building block of reefs—naturally gathers on the metal. Workers then salvage coral that has broken from damaged reefs and affix it to the structure.

Goreau and his supporters say the electricity spurs the weakened coral to revival and greater growth.

"When they get the juice, they are not as stressed," said Rani Morrow-Wuigk, an Australian-German woman who rents bungalows on the beach and has supported efforts to save the reefs for years.

And indeed, the coral on the structures appear vibrant. Supporters say the coral reefs have rebounded with impressive vigor. The coral in Pemuteran teems with clownfish, damselfish and other colorful tropical animals.

Funding problem

Funding, however, is a major problem. There are some 40 metal structures growing coral in Pemuteran Bay and about 100 cables laid to feed them with electricity, but only about a third of the wires are working because of maintenance problems and the cost of running them, according to Morrow-Wuigk.

The electrification program is part of a wider effort in the bay to save the coral.

Chris Brown, an Australian diving instructor who has lived in Bali for 17 years, said he and other people determined to save the reefs had a long struggle driving away fishermen who use dynamite and other coral-destroying methods to maintain their livelihoods. *AP*

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"For us to move, we need money to purchase land, build schools, build medical clinics. Our situation is before us. We need something tangible," Rakova said. She and other farmers and fisherman were ferried by boat, bus and plane to the Bali gathering.

In all, 190 countries are represented at the conference.

National teams

The United States is sending more than 100 delegates. All 27 countries of the European Union are flying in national teams, with Germany bringing 70 people and France 50, many of them observers who will be playing no formal role.

Hundreds of nongovernmental organizations are alsc attending, from those advocating the rights of indigenous people to those seeking to protect rapidly dwindling forests.

And there are those with something to sell, including technology to produce pure drinking water and businesses ready to capitalize on future carbon trading markets.

Expense-paid junkets

Side trips, from scuba diving to shopping, are being offered at various hotels. Indonesia's tourism ministry is set to showcase its remaining forests, island jewels and bustling metropolises with expense-paid junkets.

Some say none of that really matters in the end.

"I look at it from a very simple point of view," said Achim Steiner, executive director of the UN Environmental Program.

"It may sound like a lot of people, but you have to look at the issues, the number of countries involved, the number of people affected," he said. "Global warming is literally everyone's business." *AP*

n environment activist on Wednesday makes a case
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that is that all developed and developing countries need to be part of the global solution," the newly elected prime minister told the Southern Cross Broadcasting radio network in Australia.

"And therefore we do need to see the United States as a full ratification state," he said. *AP*

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The first OFW

EDITORIAL

ON RECEIVING THE SYMBOLIC KEY TO THE CITY of Madrid the other day, President Macapagal-Arroyo paid tribute to the most storied generation of Filipinos who ever studied abroad. "In the 19th century, Madrid attracted great thinkers and talented Filipinos of that time. Here in the liberal environment of the Spanish capital, our young patriots met to work for the welfare of the motherland, right here in the heart of mother Spain."

She was, of course, speaking of the "ilustrados"—the students from the Philippines who imbibed the spirit of the Enlightenment (thus, the Enlightened Ones) and strove to bring it, and a new dawn of freedom, to the benighted country they had left behind. The President reserved pride of place for Rizal, who very quickly and by dint of personal example became the leading ilustrado in Europe. "It was here in Madrid where Rizal started his novel 'Noli Me Tangere' which was the inspiration of the Philippine revolution," she said in Spanish.

It has been 120 years since the "Noli" first shook the foundations of Spain's Philippine colony, 60 years since Spain and the Philippines established diplomatic relations, and 45 years since Spain hosted President Diosdado Macapagal's state visit. A lot of water has passed under the proverbial bridge. But it is still a pleasant surprise to hear tribute paid to the man who inspired the revolution, in the very country the revolution was directed against.

But the President is right to highlight the role of Rizal and others like him (a role Spain itself has graciously acknowledged, with tributes like the replica of the Rizal monument in Avenida de Filipinas). They are not only heroes of the Philippine freedom struggle, but true representatives of a nation in diaspora.

In a country where at least one in every 10 Filipinos is living or working abroad, the experience of the ilustrados in Europe should be recalled, not only with "enchantment and nostalgia" (as Ms Arroyo described the relationship of "sister cities" Manila and Madrid), but with candor and realism.

The sad truth is, the "Filipino" community in Madrid in the late 19th century was divided, with a large number of students dissipating their allowances on gambling and other vices. Rizal, a master of self-discipline but a novice at diplomacy, often ended up scolding other members of the community, or complaining about them to others he held in respect. "Is there nothing there to remind them that the Filipino does not come to Europe to gamble and enjoy himself," he once wrote Marcelo H. Del Pilar, "but to work for his liberty and for the dignity of his race?"

Rizal also exhorted the Filipinos in Europe to apply themselves, not only to study (for after all they were in Europe to get themselves an education), but to the study of the Philippines: "You must study all matters related to our country. The knowledge of a thing prepares its mastery; to know is to master."

Rizal's experience in Madrid and other cities was a study in alienation; he felt violently torn apart from his homeland, and his often strained relationships with fellow Filipinos deepened his exile's sense of separation.

But at the same time, Rizal learned to depend on others like him, heroes who, if not exactly unsung, are not sung of often enough. Maximo Viola, Mariano Ponce, Jose Maria Basa—the list is long and impressive. There, too, were the more famous ones, Del Pilar first among them, and including the brothers Luna. And then there were the European scholars who came to his aid time and again, led of course by Ferdinand Blumentritt.

Rizal's experience in Madrid and other cities was, thus, also an essay in the consolations of common purpose.

Recalling all this, we cannot help but realize just how inadequate has been the government's response to the scattering of Filipinos abroad. At least eight million Filipinos abroad, and the OFW picture is reduced to the question of remittances. Surely there is more to the overseas Filipino experience than mere economics?

When the President met with representatives of the Filipino community in Madrid on Dec. 2, the topic naturally dwelt for the most part on remittances, on the need, for instance, to upgrade the OFW's "financial literacy." Well and good, but surely much more needs to be done, for the new patriots who are working "for the welfare of the motherland."

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readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342

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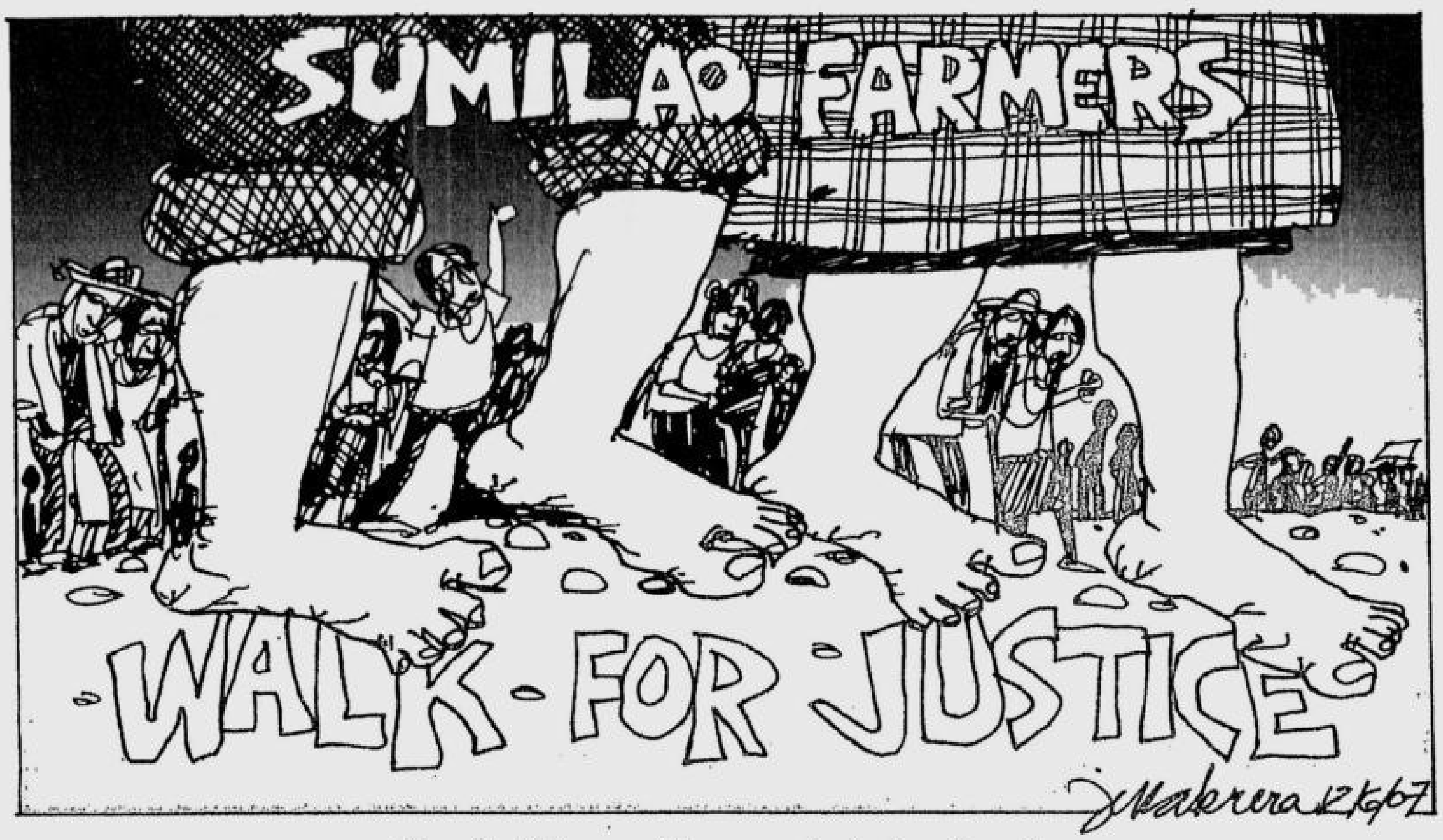

Saddling the whirlwind

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

PEOPLE POWER, WE'RE TOLD, IS THE "POST-modern coup d'etat." As their Peninsula Manila Hotel coup collapsed, former Navy Lt. (now Senator) Antonio Trillanes, Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and other rebels found, yet again, that this whirlwind can't be saddled at whim. Those who try can end as flotsam.

"Few countries do political scandal as well or as often as the Philippines, the great economic underachiever of Asia" the Australian Financial Review wrote of Trillanes' first attempt to harness people power. "Now, rumor-loving Filipinos lap up their latest political soap opera which could abort … Arroyo's mediocre presidency. It'd be hilarious if it were not so tragic."

From Oakwood hotel in 2003, Trillanes and his Magdalo called people to revolt. Media saturation covered the angry rhetoric, arm bands, combat boots, glitzy radios, new firearms, boat and air tickets for soldiers. From his clink, Joseph Estrada denied bankrolling them. This wasn't a "coup for rent," Trillanes fumed. It was about ideals—shredding the Constitution with Magdalos as caudillos. The mutiny crumbled within 24 hours when people didn't RSVP.

As communists clung to their coat-tails, the opposition boasted in 2005 that they'd hitch up "People Power" through a cell-phone barrage. "Let a thousand cell phones bloom." As President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her July State of the Nation Address, millions would then scramble for the barricades.

Japanese use cell phones for shopping. We wage revolution with them, as in People Power 2. "But the cell phones didn't ring twice this time," Viewpoint noted. (INQUIRER, 7/28/05) That attempt to clamp on a Burmese-style junta fizzled.

In 2007, people again ignored the call to mass at the Peninsula, despite Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay donning fatigues "just in case." A Honolulu Star-Bulletin cartoon captures the people's dogged refusal to shred the Constitution. Sketched by the talented Corky Trinidad, the cartoon depicts a handful of armed soldiers, perched on a mall stand, demanding: "Gloria Resign." Heedless crowds walk by as a woman asks, "What's that all about?" A man replies, "Edsa 52."

Filipinos being Filipinos, we've clogged e-mail and cell-phone circuits with jokes. "What were the 10 reasons why Trillanes & Co. packed up?" asks an Internet gag. Answers:

"(1) Not even Trillanes' mother joined them; (2) Oakwood had a better lobby; (3) Peninsula ran out of *halo-halo;* (4) The armored personnel carrier didn't use valet service to get into the hotel parking lot; instead, it rammed the lobby; (5) Trillanes said being tear-gassed was not part of his mandate as senator; (6) Guingona thought it was an anti-Erap, or pro-Erap pardon rally, whatever; (7) Surrender was better than the company of Fr. Robert Reyes; (8) Trillanes noticed people were crying, not because of the tear gas but because of him; (9) Even the President was beginning to look better the longer they stayed; (10) As at Oakwood, they'd vamoose before the hotel bill came."

The wisecracks paper over the stiff bill. The Peninsula lost P56 million. But the real cost is damage on institutional integrity and self-respect as a nation.

"Experience allows us to repeat our mistakes, only with more finesse." Yet, these rebels rerun old errors, with even more sloppiness. You can't peg a revolution on TV anchors and headlines. Trillanes, Lim et al. have a visceral dislike for the President. So do others. But theirs was reinforced by illusions of their own charisma. Their grievances were valid, but these blinded them to the self-seeking agenda of "allies."

Gandhi's Salt Tax protest in 1930 preceded Edsa and the Berlin Wall's collapse. "In countries with weak institutions and illegitimate, corrupt leaders, citizens became actors in the only way they could," says Johns Hopkins University's Riordan Roett. "Education empowered people to oppose traditional elites." And media's new technologies amplified the megaphone's reach.

"Since the 1970s, the trend … has been a gradual global shift from violent 'people's war' to nonviolent people power," Jesse Walker notes in "The Other Insurrections." Everywhere, militaries are more reluctant to repress demonstrators.

After Edsa came Czechoslovakia's "Velvet Uprising," the Ukraine's "Orange Revolution," Georgia's "Rose Rebellion." These toppled pro-Soviet governments without bloodshed. Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution" drove out Syrian occupiers. Ecuador cloned our noise-barrage against Marcos. Mass protests yanked out presidents in Bolivia, Peru, Argentina and Haiti.

Not all People Power golpes have happy endings. Did our would-be caudillos ignore this lesson?

The Uzbekistan revolt over rigged polls was brutally crushed. In Zimbabwe, misrule had inflation raging at 3,732 percent while 4.8 million people starved. But people power didn't ignite, the Christian Science Monitor reports. Like Marcos, Robert Mugabe's men torture critics and gag media, but the opposition never jelled around a leader of integrity, like South Africa's Nelson Mandela.

Outrage from offense to people's values and unkept promises are other constants. "People spurn a politics reduced to a mere contest for power between one set of crooks and another," Melba Maggay of the Institute for Studies in Church and Culture says. Are the Pen rebels any better than junketing lawmakers in Madrid's Gran Via?

In seeking to saddle the whirlwind, our rebels echoed Glendower's boast: "I can call spirits from the vasty deep." But they didn't listen to Hotspur's reply. "Why, so can I. Or so can any man/ But will they come when you do call for them?"

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Babel

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE TELLS ME: THE THING ABOUT their language is that they sound like they're whining or remonstrating with each other with their long-drawn nasal sounds. We are at the Bangkok airport, caught in a layover of nine hours en route home, a situation conducive to making demented observations and unkind remarks. We are watching a group of Thai airport personnel engaged in animated conversation, their sudden bursts of laughter belying the notion of remonstration.

I say through the tiredness seeping through my bones: "You wonder what they're saying about how we sound talking in Tagalog. For all you know they're talking about us now, which is why they're laughing their heads off."

It's not easy dozing off among the chairs in this cavernous place, something I'm normally able to do (used to be able to doze off standing on a bus in my student days). The airport's air-conditioning is turned on full blast, offering an aftertaste of what we just had, and the modernist metal seats conduct the cold ferociously. You slouch on them for a while and you feel the cold radiating on your back. You would think people who had gone through so much trouble to build a spectacular edifice would have had the foresight to supply chairs that do not hold the promise of pneumonia.

I know, of course, the complaint just comes from envy that they're able to build a spectacular edifice like this. I haven't been to Bangkok in years, and the last time I was here, they still had the old airport. And that already depressed me, the contrast between it and Naia driving home the point about a Southeast Asian country that had progressed and another that had not. This new one adds whole new dimensions to the depression, its epic demonstration of confidence, if not bravado, driving home the point about a once developing country that has barged into the 21st century and another that has not.

And to think the Thais used to troop to the Mecca of knowledge that was the University of the Philippines in the 1960s and 1970s!

Listening to the airport personnel again, with their laughter and their elongated nasal twang, or whine, I am hit by sudden epiphany. Years after many Thais studied at UP and other universities abroad, their adeptness at the language, whether verbal or written, remains at best tenuous. It's all passengers can do to carry on an easy conversation with airport personnel. You ask for directions, you have to rely more on the answerer's physical gestures than on his words. I recall that the Far Eastern Economic Review used to have a field day in its Traveler's Tales poking fun at the violence Thais wreak on the English language. I myself have heard all sorts of funny stories from friends about their experiences with Thais. One couldn't understand why a flight attendant kept badgering him with "chiknapok," only to realize after the attendant's exasperated repetition that he was being asked if he wanted chicken or pork.

We, of course, pride ourselves in our apparent mastery of English (more apparent than real), particularly our ability to speak it with a reasonably understandable diction (including the often bizarre ones of congressmen), if not with a simulated American accent. The pride is not entirely without basis. Despite our deteriorating adeptness in English (a thing I would attribute in great part to the precipitous decline of reading, though the plague has spread to all parts of the world, even in Britain as a BBC report lamented), we still speak better English than our Southeast Asian neighbors. (The South Asians speak better English than we do.)

But there's the rub. We speak better English than our Southeast Asian neighbors, but look at our Southeast Asian neighbors (including increasingly the former Indochinese ones) and you'll see that nearly all of them have left us biting their dust. Singapore certainly has. Malaysia certainly has. Even Indonesia and Vietnam are so. Indeed, just look at this airport in Bangkok, as unabashed a display of prosperity as they come (you'd take a day traversing the expanse of it) and, well, what's the feeling beyond depressed?

Maybe it has to do with language, with a grasp (or lack of it) of what it's supposed to do. Those of us who keep emphasizing English as a way to communicate with tourists and find jobs abroad—which includes the current occupant in Malacañang; that was what she was saying in a graduation speech when she was heckled by one of the graduates—may think we are saying the most commonsensical thing in the world. But other people would find that the battiest thing in the world. The primary function of language is not for a people to communicate with foreigners, it is for a people to communicate with themselves. The primary function of language is not for a government to communicate with other governments, it is for a government to communicate with its citizens.

Maybe that's the reason they are what they are now and we are what we are now. Maybe they've built airports like this because they have found a way to talk to each other and tell each other exactly what to do. Maybe we've been reduced to looking for menial jobs in foreign companies or foreign shores because we've found a way to talk only to our employers and masters. Maybe they've been invited to the gala because they have interpreters who can tell the other guests what they're saying and so engage them in conversation. Maybe we serve as waiters in the same event because we know enough to offer them a glass of wine and a smile. Maybe the twang and/or whine they emit when they speak is the sound of music and the mellifluous English our call-center army produces is the sound only of distant thunder.

Maybe we are cursed only to build an unfinished tower while speaking the language of Babel.

Good show

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

YESTERDAY' S DIALOGUE BETWEEN MEDIA REPresentatives and the law enforcers and their civilian superiors at the Peninsula Manila, under the auspices of the Kilusan ng mga Brodkasters sa Pilipinas, was most welcome as it clarified some issues. Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, PMS chief Cerge Remonde, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo, as well as PNP Director General Avelino Razon and military commanders defined the crux of the issue: the media were there to inform the public on what's going on, while the police were there to quell the rebellion without loss of lives, before nightfall. This divergence of jobs and viewpoints is what's causing the current dispute between the two sides. It has been a sore point between them from the beginning of journalism and will doubtless continue to be so owing to the nature of things.

* * *

TV is a cruel medium. It tended to show some media people as quite arrogant and petulant. One or two were candid enough to say that they did not recognize the Pen crisis as a "rebellion," forcing Puno to redefine it for them according to his law books; and almost to a man, they protested the arrest of journalists as unconstitutional. By contrast, the government panel sounded humble but firm and well prepared, citing various provisions here and abroad of penal codes that state in no uncertain terms the primacy of the state's obligation to secure public safety. Puno stressed that the final judgment on the conduct of operations lies with the ground commander, to which one network executive asserted that on the contrary, that rests with media management. At that point, Razon became visibly upset. If civilians are killed in a police operation, he asked, "will you assume responsibility?"

* * *

Several valid points were raised. Puno asserted that the government would continue to abide by the Revised Penal Code, and that if the media disagreed with this, they should work for its revision by Congress. Good point.

A journalist said that perhaps one way to help media get their coveted coverage, despite being barred from a crisis area, is to have a spokesperson who could keep them regularly posted on developments. On this point, I recall a development in Mindanao in 1993, when my husband was the island's top commander. American Bible translator Charles Walton was kidnapped by Muslim extremists in Sulu and a giant rescue operation was launched by the Southern Command. Vice President Joseph Estrada, then the anti-crime czar, flew to Zamboanga and wanted to go to Sulu immediately, together with a horde of media people from Manila. Lieutenant General Cunanan asked him not to proceed as it would disturb delicate ongoing operations and, to his credit, Estrada saw his point and stayed in the comforts of the Orchid Garden Hotel. Naturally the Manila and local media were disgruntled, but my husband said that if they wanted it, he could arrange for a briefing every hour on the hour. At the appointed time, he flew Estrada and the media to Jolo and in no time got Walton out. But at that time, the media were far less petulant and egotistical than many of today's media personalities, who seem to be affected by their superstar status and the realization of their frightening power to shape events.

* * *

The RP-United Kingdom Friendship Week now being observed here and in London acquires special significance from the one-on-one meeting between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace today. The visit was facilitated mainly by Prince Andrew, whom GMA met at the Malaysian independence anniversary in Kuala Lumpur. In addition, Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu has arranged a series of trade and investment functions for her so she can meet with the CEOs of several major UK companies in the power, energy and IT fields.

UK investments here have grown over the years, the latest of which is that of Cape East, which launched a training center in Taguig to help upgrade the skills of 1,200 workers yearly in power, oil, gas, petrochemical, refining and processing industries. UK companies have also set up substantial business process outsourcing here. In fact, RP won the "Best Offshoring Destination of the Year" award from the National Outsourcing Association, UK's only outsourcing trade association. Major companies such as Hyder currently employ over 200 Filipino graduates to provide design engineering work for Middle East operations, and this number will expand as jobs move from India to RP. Shell has the largest outsourced services operation in Manila with over 1,600 employees, while HSBC will soon employ some 9,000 people in call centers here.

RP-UK Friendship Week will see a number of activities, including the arrival of British trade missions in the IT and waste management sectors; the launch of a methane project with UK technology in Montalban, Rizal; a medical mission to Tondo; and a seminar organized by De La Salle University Professional Schools and the Institute of Corporate Directors on corporate social responsibility. It's also noteworthy that Pinoys received this year the third-largest number of fellowships from the UK government for short-term studies there.

* * *

Chief Justice Reynato Puno will be the speaker today at 2 p.m. at the first Luzviminda D. Puno Memorial Lecture, organized by the University of the East College of Law. Dean Amado Valdez said the lecture at the UE Conference Hall is dedicated to the memory of Puno's late wife, who provided the inspiration for his phenomenal rise to the SC's top post. Two other UE events are the Philippine Association of Law Schools convention today at 11 a.m. with SC Justice Dante Tinga as keynote speaker, and the third Distinguished Lecture series of 2007, tomorrow at 3 p.m.

Leaders for Health Program

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"STORIES OF TOWN MAYORS GIVING OUT medicines, from paracetamol to penicillin, are not unusual because these can get votes. On the other hand, municipal doctors complain about not having enough funds to buy common drugs and gasoline for the ambulance in emergencies. Community members largely stay on the sidelines, rarely participating in the arenas of local governance."

This is the scenario that is common especially in far-flung places. This is the situation that the Leaders for Health Program (LHP) wants to address and change "by making health part of the governance process wherein there is transparency, efficiency and civic participation."

Situations like the one that broke into the news recently, the one about the outbreak of parasite infection or capillariasis in Zamboanga del Norte. Reports said at least 70 had already died in the village of Moyo in Zamboanga del Norte, leaving families orphaned. More than 300 villagers had been infected and suffered chronic diarrhea and dehydration.

The poor villagers had been eating river fish and shrimps that had the capillariasis worm because there was little else. And when struck by the disease, they could not afford the medicines. Worse, there was not enough medicine. No tests had been done so the mortality was simply attributed to chronic diarrhea. But what caused the diarrhea?

I don't know if the doctor was quoted right, but she simply blamed the villagers because "they don't know how to defecate ... they die because they could not even follow simple instructions."

What a malodorous statement, what a lethal situation.

The Ateneo de Manila University's Professional Schools is offering the Leaders for Health program not only for doctors but for local officials and community workers as well. Through the "tri-leaders" strategy, the program aims to enhance governance skills in municipalities.

You just don't send down a doctor brimming with idealism, then expect him or her to do wonders in a remote area. With LHP training, this doctor could become a leader and help in the transformation of communities.

The four-year LHP course does not mean the doctor will be away from the community that long. The program, in fact, requires the doctor to serve for four years in the community while at the same time studying for a master's in Community Health Care Management. The two-year academic component is spread out in modules. The doctor would have to attend the modules at the Rockwell campus. In the case of modules for mayors or community workers, professors and mentors are sometimes flown to places where the trainees are gathered for the academic and theoretical components.

The classroom component enables the health workers to reflect on the realties, learn theories and make plans of action that would improve the health-delivery system in their areas.

The mayor would have to be a student again and enroll in a certificate course in Community Health Management. A series of short-term modules would not only help get funds for the town's health programs, the modules would also help the mayor work with the doctor and improve local governance.

How many elected local executives could say they were ready for the job of governance? For many, it was a hit-and-miss thing, an on-the-job training. LHP provides focus so that time and effort are not wasted for learning and unlearning.

Community leaders are the third leg of the stool. They are the bridge between the doctors, the mayors and the people. They are enrolled in a certificate course that would help them participate in health planning.

LHP is not just a program that sends doctors to remote, forgotten towns. It has evolved into a school without walls, training doctors, politicians and community leaders "to change the way people think, behave and feel about health and their well-being."

Ateneo is not alone in this. It has learned from the Doctors to the Barrios program. It is supported by the Department of Health's Center for Health and Development as well as by corporations that allocate funds. LHP also counts on individuals to give through the P60 campaign. There is the Adopt-a-Municipality Program that would provide scholarships for mayors, doctors and community leaders. (Email info@leadersforhealth.org for more information.)

Ateneo has published a booklet that has heartwarming stories on the LHP experiences, which are backed up by solid data on communities served. These are on-the-ground stories about individuals and communities, the problems encountered, the solutions found, the partnerships formed.

These are stories of hope and transformation. There should be more of these.

* * *

"Don't' abandon us!" The Sumilao farmers who walked 1,700 kilometers from Bukidnon to Manila, braved heat and rain, suffered hunger and fatigue are crying out to the government to heed their plea for justice.

I hope Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman, who flew to Bukidnon to see for himself the contested 144-hectare land that the Sumilao farmers are supposed to have won, would realize why the farmers have gone this far. The certificates of land ownership award (CLOA) of the farmer-beneficiaries had been cancelled and the land given back to the former landowner.

The farmers felt that the DAR had abandoned them in the past when the land conversion went unchallenged, and the Supreme Court, because of mere technicalities, had to uphold the former owners who are now converting the land into a piggery farm for San Miguel Food Inc.

I hope the farmers don't go home forlorn and empty-handed this Christmas.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

The ones who got in the way

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

FILIPINO JOURNALISTS, PARTICULARLY BROADcast journalists, have received a thumping from the public for protesting their being rounded up and questioned after the Peninsula Manila caper. More often than not, you hear media critics thunder, "Why, they were warned, so now they complain. What are they, special?"

Well, this is what our Constitution has to say on the matter, and it seems significant, to me, that our basic law tends to think that the mass media are special enough to merit specific provisions concerning the profession. Take Article XVI, General Provisions of the Constitution. There's Section 10: "The State shall provide the policy environment for the full development of Filipino capability and the emergence of communication structures suitable to the needs and aspirations of the nation and the balanced flow of information into, out of, and across the country, in accordance with a policy that respects the freedom of speech and of the press."

And there's Section 11: "(1) The ownership and management of mass media shall be limited to citizens of the Philippines, or to corporations, cooperatives or associations, wholly-owned and managed by such citizens." The same section goes on to say, "The Congress shall regulate or prohibit monopolies in commercial mass media when the public interest so requires. No combinations in restraint of trade or unfair competition therein shall be allowed." Furthermore, Congress, of course, grants franchises to broadcast media, a power it doesn't have when it comes to print.

You'll notice that the Constitution refers to "freedom of speech and of the press," and you might wonder why freedom's specifically guaranteed for speech and the press.

Our Bill of Rights (Article III, Section 4) says, "No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances." This provision is an offspring of the American Constitution's First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Now does this mean that we have two separate freedoms at work: for free speech, to which we are all entitled, and for a specific sector, namely, the press? Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., for example, from whom most sensible people take their cue on the correct approach to exploring constitutional questions, explains it in this way: The media have no special rights, because any freedoms they can claim are freedoms to which all citizens are entitled. This is not an extremist opinion.

Cornell University Law School's Wex Site says, "Despite popular misunderstanding, the right to freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment is not very different from the right to freedom of speech. It allows individuals to express themselves through publication and dissemination. It is part of the constitutional protection of freedom of expression. It does not afford members of the media any special rights or privileges not afforded to citizens in general."

What is guaranteed, then, is that the freedom we're all entitled to, is a freedom members of media are firmly entitled to, too, even if the ordinary citizen doesn't engage in exercising those freedoms on a constant basis, the way the media do. If the media are entitled to special treatment, it comes, as developed by American jurisprudence, anyway, from the development of the idea that what media are entitled to, as a special protection, is freedom from what's called "prior restraint" on the part of the authorities.

US Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes (a conservative, mind you, and nemesis of Franklin D. Roosevelt) explained the nature of this privilege. "[T]he administration of government," he wrote, "has become more complex, the opportunities for malfeasance and corruption have multiplied, crime has grown to most serious proportions, and the danger of its protection by unfaithful officials and of the impairment of the fundamental security of life and property by criminal alliances and official neglect, emphasizes the primary need of a vigilant and courageous press, especially in great cities. The fact that the liberty of the press may be abused by miscreant purveyors of scandal does not make any the less necessary the immunity of the press from previous restraint in dealing with official misconduct. Subsequent punishment for such abuses as may exist is the appropriate remedy, consistent with constitutional privilege."

The problem, of course, is that freedom from prior restraint is something still being developed, both in the United States and in our own legal thinking. The evolution of this doctrine necessarily involves, not blind, unthinking submission to the authorities, but challenging the authorities, which of course tends to upset those who uncritically accept, say, our colonial and undemocratic Revised Penal Code.

The arguments of journalists, I think, basically relies on another part of the Bill of Rights, namely, Section 7: "The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law." And also, on Section 17: "No person shall be compelled to be a witness against himself."

Now you may be irritated by our local media, but let me ask you, why did the BBC correspondent stick it out to the end, too, along with the NHK correspondent and the camera crew of the Associated Press? What were they thinking that was so different from the natives?

Awake to dream

YOUNG BLOOD

Cey Enriquez

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

AT 5 YEARS, I ALREADY KNEW WHAT I WANTED. AND I worked hard—sometimes, even behind my parents' backs—to get to the goal, which at that time was to join the "Little Ms Philippines" contest on "Eat Bulaga." I nagged my mom to please, please, let me join. And every year, the default answer was, "Next year, *sasali ka.*" Until I turned 8, and became over-aged.

So I nagged her to let me join the "Lunch Date" version instead, because their cut-off age was 8, and I could still qualify. That's when she finally told me she didn't really like the idea of me joining the contest. It broke my heart.

But I wasn't a kid who just gave up. I wanted to be in a pageant, so I had to be in a pageant. In fact, I have been in more than one. There were times when my mom would suddenly find out that I had already signed up for a neighborhood contest. With the organizers already knocking at our door to confirm my participation, how could she resist? I was never "Little Ms Philippines," but I have been "Little Ms San Roque," "Little Ms Barangay Barangka Itaas"—and almost "Little Ms Sambahayan."

A part of me says I ought to be embarrassed about all this. After all, these aren't exactly the things you write on your resumé. But if I were to live out those days again, I don't think I'd change anything. Come to think of it, I'm not embarrassed by the younger me. Instead, I envy her because she knew what she wanted. She went after her dream, and savored every moment of it.

Until now I can still remember how excited I felt when I was put on a tricycle to parade around the streets, waving at the neighbors as I rode on my makeshift limo. For the talent portion, I donned my Hawaiian skirt and danced to the tune of "Pearly Shells"/ "Tiny Bubbles." You should've seen the way I smiled as I had my picture taken with Romnick and Harlene, or when I saw Jestoni Alarcon and his curly bangs, and, of course, when I was finally crowned as I stood beside "Little Mr. San Roque," who looked exactly like Randy Santiago's mini-me (yup, complete with the spiky hair and mole!). As grand prize for one of those pageants, I got P300. No educational plan, no roundtrip ticket to some nice country, no show-biz contract, just that sweet P300. But I didn't really care about the prize. I was happy just to be there.

It was never about the prize. Well, that may not be entirely true. Of course, I never joined any of those contests without wanting to win, but it was never just about the prize. It was about being there, doing what I wanted to do and knowing that I was living out a dream.

As a child, I understood better what others said about life being a journey to be enjoyed. Now, I find myself trying to relearn to enjoy the ride, because lately, it seems, the views have started to be the same. Living has become a habit. Like when you're traveling down NLEX and after you see the first 5-km stretch, you've pretty much seen it all. It becomes all about focusing on the clutch, the gas and the occasional braking. Nothing much to enjoy there.

It's all about getting to the destination, but where it is exactly, I pretty much can't tell. I may have the broad strokes of a dream—of making my parents happy, having a great career, having my own house, starting a family with Regi, providing well for our future kids. Generic dreams. Dreams that people my age ought to have. They're not bad dreams at all. But what I'm missing is something like my 5-year-old "Little Ms Philippines" dream—funky, exciting, to some extent even defining.

Sadly, I've come to realize that I have grown old. I've put down the party hat and put on the cynical one. I've forgotten how it was like to want something really, really badly. Of not caring about what's possible and what's not. Of believing that I can make things happen. Of being free to want and dream of things outside of the usual.

A friend told me that maybe it's because I already got the things I've always wanted. Maybe it's time to finally be content. But we seem to have been built with this nagging voice inside us, telling us that we ought to be doing more, dreaming of bigger things. I'm not necessarily talking about winning an adult pageant (at this point, that would qualify more as a delusion than a dream), or making more money (which isn't such a bad dream, because dreams after all, don't come free), but something along the lines of well, say, making a difference.

If that sounds so heavy and serious, I still can't imagine myself dying at this age and being greeted at heaven's gate (hopefully, heaven's gate!) with the question: "So, Cey, what have you done with your life?" What would I do then, rattle off my resumé? I don't think God needs a copywriter right now. Would it be enough to say, "Well, I think I have been a good daughter ... I think." Or "I've done my best to be a good Filipino. I voted. Look at my finger!" It's definitely nothing like, "I closed the gaping hole of the ozone layer." Or "I found an answer to Pinoy poverty." Or "I found a cure for cancer!"

I believe that we've all been put in this world with a purpose to fulfill. And each of us have been given gifts as tools—not merely to survive, but to thrive and to make a difference in each others' lives. But at 26, I'm not sure I've served my purpose well enough.

Bo Sanchez wrote, quoting John Gray, "What you can feel, you can heal." And thankfully, by writing this, I have come to face the source of my frustrations. Through the years, I have found it easier to just go with the flow of things and wait for whatever life would throw my way. I have spent much of my waking hours merely existing as best as I could that I have forgotten to make time to dream big. There may always be reasons to doubt, but I guess the wonderful thing about dreams is that you can go as far as your thoughts can reach—beyond the doubts and impossibilities—with nobody stopping you but yourself.

Now I take it back: I don't think I've grown old, I've merely slacked off. Now it's time for the "Little Ms Philippines" wannabe to get the dream machine back on track. After all, what good would these waking hours be, if they're not spent living out a big dream?

Cey Enriquez, 26, works in an advertising agency.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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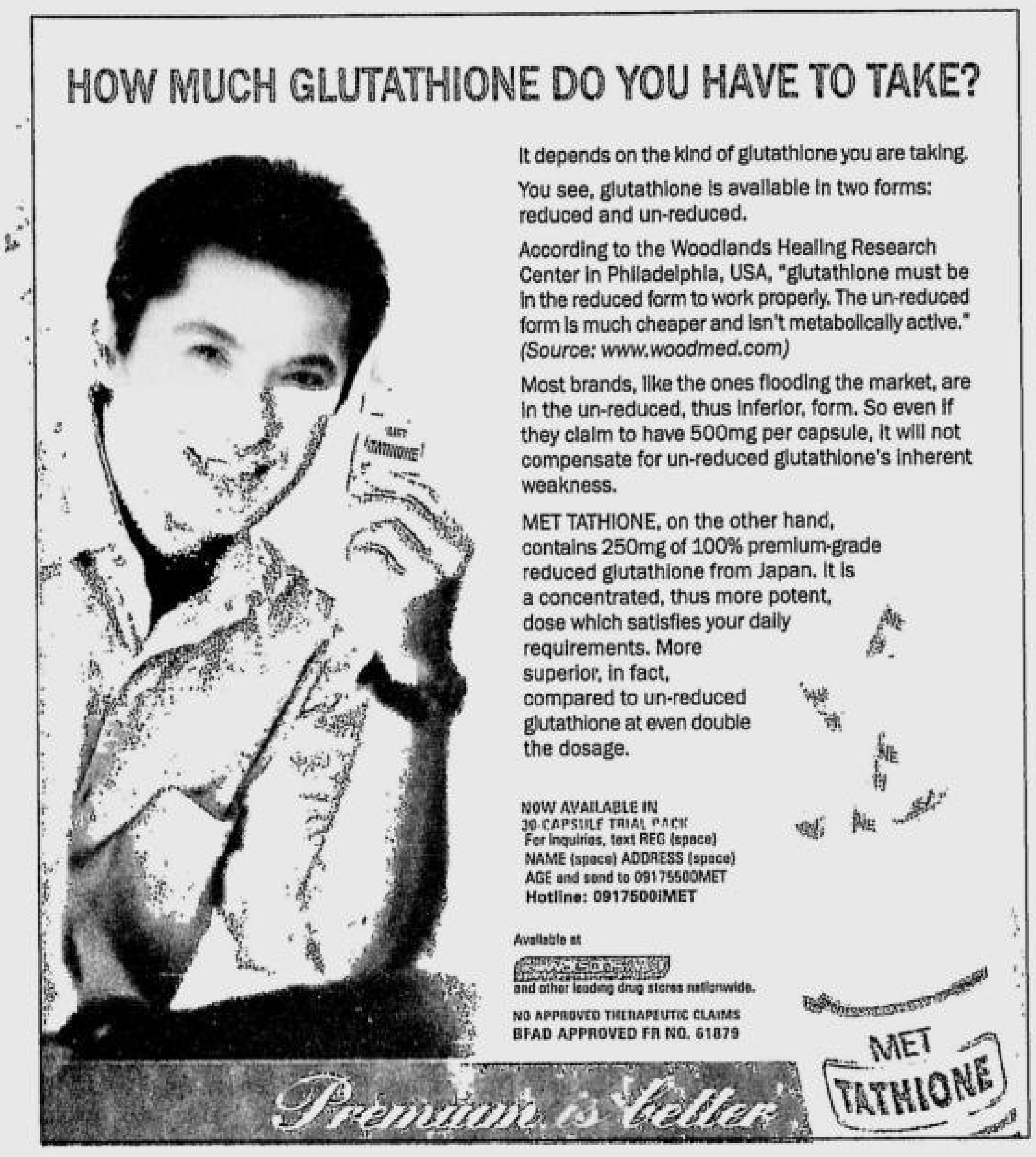
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Changes the UK would like to see

DIPLOMATIC POUCH

Peter Beckingham

A forum for foreign missions

THIS WEEK PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has her first meeting at Buckingham Palace with Her Majesty the Queen, who has been Britain's head of state for over 50 years. This is a good time to reflect on why the two countries matter to each other, and how we in Britain would like the relationship to develop.

The first British contacts with the Philippines were about trade and investment. A 22-year-old Scot, Alexander Dalrymple, drew up trade agreements with the Sultan of Sulu in the 1750s! To a lot of people's surprise, Britain remains one of the key investors in the Philippines, running neck and neck with the United States, Japan and South Korea.

Our banks have call centers with nearly 10,000 employees; Luzon is dependent on electricity from a UK joint venture with First Gas, and Shell's Malampaya field; and British engineering companies are establishing operations in Makati, employing hundreds of Philippine graduates. In an exciting new venture, Virgin Atlantic's fleet of Airbuses will soon be serviced in Manila.

We have a lot in common internationally. Like the Philippines, we want to see the Burmese regime instigate change and improve its dire human rights record.

We too have been hit by Islamic terrorists, and we work hard with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and other organizations in Mindanao to prevent further outrages. Like the Philippines, we have a minority of Muslim citizens, and we have programs in Southern Philippines with Islamic religious leaders, government officials and NGOs to develop a greater understanding between Christian and non-Christian communities. On Dec. 8, a representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury and a distinguished Islamic scholar are visiting Manila together to meet Catholic and Muslim leaders.

We want to see urgent action on climate change, including involving Southeast Asia, agreed at the Bali conference this month. I have appreciated the straightforward approach on these issues by Environment Secretary Lito Atienza and Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Sharing these common interests, not to mention the 200,000 Filipinos living and working in the United Kingdom, we want to see the Philippines prosper. Where does the British Embassy look for change, particularly where it might enhance our relationship?

It is not for us to get involved with your Constitution. But British business has no doubt that the Philippine economy could grow even faster than over the last six years if it was more open to competition. The playing field doesn't always feel very level to some of our companies. Removing some of the economic provisions, which are more restrictive than in other Asean markets, could make a real difference to the business environment of the Philippines. European businesses would like to invest more freely in land, the law, the media and education. In the United Kingdom some of our airports, ports and motorways are owned by Spanish, Dubai and Australian companies, respectively, and our economy is among the strongest in Europe.

Like other countries, the United Kingdom has had its share of corruption, involving the imprisonment of a number of high-profile former ministers and officials. The embassy has been running a series of economic governance programs which will help to stimulate the more transparent and open government that the President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives aspire to develop. The European Union has also funded work by one of Hong Kong's anti-corruption experts and we hope that his work will make a difference; from a UK perspective it is essential that what he has started doesn't wither on the vine.

In a candid moment recently, one member of the Cabinet acknowledged publicly that Philippine schools and hospitals are straining at the seams to accommodate the young and the sick. I have seen the pressures for myself from Aurora to Zamboanga. Everyone is entitled to make his own choices about population control and family planning, but to an outsider's eye the current population rates are simply unsustainable over the next 15 years.

Two British businessmen who have left Manila to run major subsidiaries in other Asian countries have told me recently that they look back enviously at the quality of their Philippine workforce. The embassy is also fortunate to work with over 60 dedicated Filipino staff. Together with the Alumni Association, which is a group of Filipinos who have studied in Britain, we have launched "RP-UK Friendship Week: Business That Cares" this December. We hope that the events under this program will highlight the depth and range of our interests in the Philippines.

Next year, we move to our own purpose-built, imposing building in Fort Bonifacio. Our new embassy could not be a more vivid demonstration that the Philippines matters to Britain, and that we intend to work with the Philippine government, business and civil society to see the country prosper in the 21st century.

Peter Beckingham is the British ambassador to the Philippines.

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Other immoral acts of gov't

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

A RECENT FULL-PAGE ADVERTISEMENT called for the rejection of "a morally bankrupt government," which is the Arroyo regime. It mentioned several acts of moral bankruptcy—among them, the Joc-Joc Bolante fertilizer scam, the repressive CPR (calibrated preemptive response), the ZTE scandal, the "cash gifts" distributed to congressmen and local officials right in Malacañang.

Hardly had the ink dried on the ad when the Arroyo regime did the following:

1. It appointed Sandiganbayan Justice Teresita Leonardo-de Castro, head of the Sandiganbayan special division that found ousted President Joseph "Erap" Estrada guilty of plunder, associate justice of the Supreme Court. No matter how qualified for and deserving De Castro is of the position, it is impossible not to see her appointment to the high court as a reward for convicting Estrada. The timing of the appointment, so soon after the conviction, rules out any other conclusion.

2. The European peregrination of President Macapagal-Arroyo and her family (together with almost 40 members of the House of Representatives and close friends and relatives)—to meet with the royalty of Spain, London and Paris—at a time when millions of workers, peasants, urban poor and others are in the deadly and degrading grip of poverty and hunger. Doesn't Ms Arroyo's entourage betray utter disregard of the sensibilities of the Filipino people?

Doesn't the (Sen. Antonio) Trillanes-(Brig. Gen. Danilo) Lim caper become understandable when viewed through the prism of a "runaway moral bankruptcy"?

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Unit 301 Union Square Condominium,
145 15th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City

GSIS launched reforms to neutralize syndicates

THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE System appreciates Honesto General's Nov. 21 column on the very timely topic of protecting the benefits of GSIS members.

General hit the proverbial nail on the head: For the longest time, the GSIS was plagued with complaints of fictitious loans that targeted members disinterested in their benefits. There came a point when members resorted to taking out loans they didn't need, just to deter "syndicates" from touching their benefits and privileges.

When GSIS president Winston F. Garcia assumed office in 2001, he initiated a reform program specifically intended to pluck these syndicates out of their "woodworks." This entailed a massive cleansing of our database.

The effort showed very disturbing realizations: our old records contained 1.3 million fictitious or duplicitous members. Unscrupulous elements were able to capitalize on this opportunity by making millions of cash not only from unsuspecting members, but also from nonexistent members and pensioners. In the years that followed the reform, several cases were filed against those involved in these criminal activities.

We won this skirmish, but the war is far from over. We had to wage an ongoing campaign to put an end to these illegal activities. Our weapon of choice: information.

Before, members had no idea of their records. Today, the GSIS sends them, twice a year, the Members Status of Membership Account (Soma) detailing their premium payments, loan payments and other relevant information. The idea is for them to complain if they find discrepancies so that the GSIS can act on their tips immediately. Whether the fault lies with the GSIS employees or government agencies, the GSIS does not hesitate to take appropriate action to address these.

We have even made it easier for them to send their complaints. They can e-mail us through crmd@gsis.gov.ph or text us (GSIS ID number<space>their message and send to 4747).

It is hoped that this sense of vigilance will bring out the level of efficiency that members deserve from the GSIS. It is hoped that these efforts will continue to attract the attention and support of the media, similar to the commendable effort of General.

—ELLA. E. VALENCERINA,
vice president,
Public Affairs Office,
Government Service Insurance System,
Financial Center, Pasay City

Is health department a PR firm or a service agency?

IS THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BECOMing a PR firm?

What could be more tragic and devastating in the wake of a typhoon than a disturbing and rude statement of a local health official blaming the victims of an epidemic instead of taking the lead to control and contain the situation?

"They don't know how to defecate, they don't know how to follow prescriptions" said Dr. Carmencita Icao of the DOH in Zamboanga del Norte, in connection with the deaths caused by capillariasis in a village under her jurisdiction.

Her denial of the official death toll almost passes for a military press release on the extrajudicial killings.

But what could have been in the mind of the doctor? Or could there be something in the bureaucratic mind or manual that says, "If you can't help them, blame them"; or something that suggests that death tolls are only fictions, products of creative minds?

The incident once again showed how unprepared the DOH and its sub-units are for epidemics. Oddly enough, the denial is almost a repeat of the "case of neonatal sepsis" at the Rizal Medical Center, where mothers were "found" to be the carriers of the fatal virus that caused the death of several newborns.

Epidemic outbreaks have somehow become common in our country not just because of the non-preventive design of our health care system; also problematic is how underreported cases are oftentimes given a different spin or none at all.

This situation only again proves our government's lack of preparedness in times of calamities. The health department is fast becoming a PR firm rather than a service agency.

—PHILIP PARAAN,
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Rizal, Makati City

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Human trafficking cases in E. Visayas 'alarming'

GOVERNMENT officials pose for pictures with victims of trafficking.
OVP PHOTO

TACLOBAN CITY—EASTERN Visayas continues to be a source of women and children being sent to Metro Manila brothels and sweatshops, and the number of trafficking cases is alarming, according to the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the region.

DSWD officials said the number of human trafficking cases was increasing despite efforts to stop them.

"Eastern Visayas remains to be a sending region," said Leticia Corillo, DSWD regional director.

She said the victims were mostly children and women who were recruited by trafficking gangs. The victims end up working without pay in brothels and sweatshops in Metro Manila, she said.

Last year, the number of human trafficking cases reached 185, up from only 108 in 2005, Corillo said.

From January to June, the DSWD monitored 108 cases of human trafficking. Over 70 percent of the cases involved women, while the rest involved male and female children aged 13 years to 17 years, she said.

Since the campaign against human trafficking started in 2004, the regional DSWD has filed eight cases against traffickers, Corillo said.

The cases remain pending in various courts, she said.

Violators of Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, face up to 20 years imprisonment and fine of up to P5 million.

Corillo also lamented that local executives, even in areas where human trafficking was prevalent, were indifferent to the problem and not keen on acting on it.

She appealed to them to establish a council to protect women and children as a way of combating the increasing number of human trafficking cases.

Corillo said most of the victims that the DSWD rescued came from the towns of Paranas and Jiabong, and Calbayog City in Samar province, and Mapanas and Las Navas in Northern Samar.

The exit point for victims bound for Luzon is Allen town in Northern Samar.

Corillo also said that the recruiters were often distant relatives of the victims.

Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas

THE GIANT Christmas tree that was aglow with 10,000 lights. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

10,000 lights brighten Puerto

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—AROUND 15,000 residents huddled in the city's Baywalk to witness the switching on of a 112-foot Christmas tree on Saturday, a tradition that ushered in the holiday season.

Despite cloudy skies, the 10,000 colorful lights with glowing designs provided a gleeful spirit to the city when they were switched on at nightfall.

Mayor Edward Hagedorn told everyone present during the lighting ceremony "to cling for unity in a desire to bring forth prosperity among its residents."

Hagedorn highlighted in his message that the city government was longing for the city's P600-million share from the Malampaya natural gas proceeds.

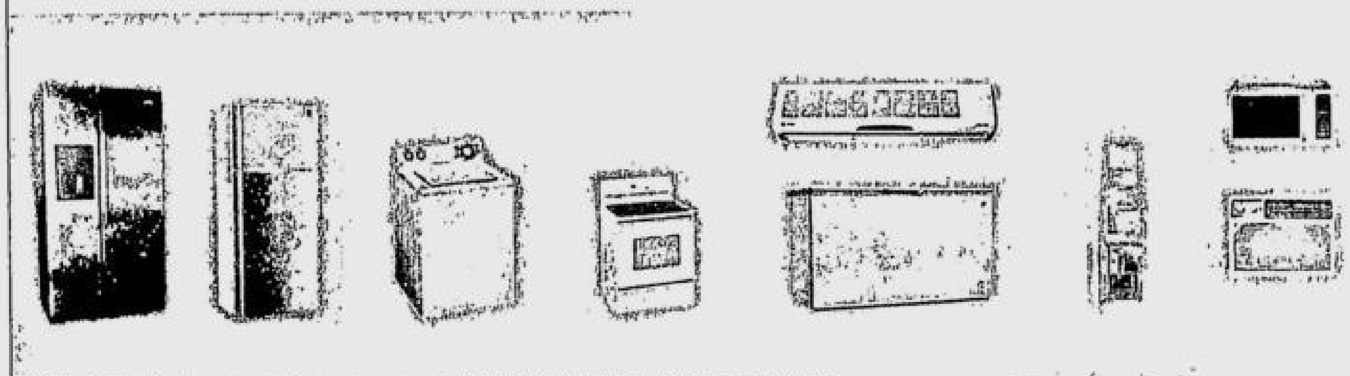
He said this share would bolster the development of the city.

"We are hoping that the share of Puerto Princesa will be given to us the soonest," he said.

Gov. Joel T. Reyes earlier said Malacañang and the province had an agreement to split royalty payments to the Malampaya gas project frozen by the Supreme Court pending its ruling regarding the project's ownership.

President Macapagal-Arroyo sealed the agreement with Palawan leaders on Nov. 28 during a meeting that included Hagedorn.

The mayor earlier complained that the city had been left out in initial negotiations and lobbied to block the release of the royalty. *Geraldford Ticke, Contributor*



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MNLF says Army war in Sulu bad for pact

COTABATO CITY—THE MORO NATIONAL Liberation Front (MNLF) yesterday said it was worried about the renewed military operation in Sulu as this could hurt its meeting with the government and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in Manila next month.

The meeting was aimed at examining the 1996 peace treaty between the MNLF and the government.

Despite the agreement, government forces and MNLF combatants regularly clash, the latest of which was in Sulu.

Since the resumption of the hostilities between the military and MNLF forces in Sulu under Habier Malik in November, 11 people have died and several others injured. Civilians have also been displaced.

The military said the operation was meant to "neutralize" Malik, who is now considered one of the "high-value targets" in the province.

Malik was the MNLF commander who took hostage several government and military officials this year.

Hatimil Hassan, MNLF interim vice chair, said the military operation could result in a full-blown clash between soldiers and MNLF forces.

"I talked to some officials belonging to the office of the presidential adviser on the peace process to do everything to prevent the situation from escalating," Hassan said.

Hassan said the MNLF viewed the operation as "violation of the peace treaty we signed with the government." *Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*

MORO guerrillas, belonging to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), march in their camp in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. The MILF was born out of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

INQUIRER PHOTO

NEWSBRIEFS

Suspects in slaying listed

SORSOGON CITY—Police said they already had a list of suspects in the killing of a village chief in Donsol town on Nov. 30.

Senior Insp. Jigo Lopez, city police chief, said lawmen were now pursuing some leads that would give a clear picture of what really was behind the fatal shooting of Rodolfo Apuli, alias Omping, purportedly the man behind the operation of illegal fishing in the western seacoast of Bicol and Southern Tagalog (not a crusader against commercial fishing as earlier reported).

Apuli and two of his security aides were shot dead by three persons as they were about to leave an oath-taking ceremony of village officials in Barangay Tres Marias in Donsol, known for its whale sharks.

But Lopez refused to divulge the names of the suspects for the meantime, saying he had yet to confer with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, the lead investigating agency.

Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Body in boat sinking found

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The death toll in last week's accident involving two motorboats, which capsized in Taal Lake at the height of Typhoon "Lando," rose to six after rescuers recovered the body of another victim on Tuesday in Talisay, Batangas.

Batangas police director Senior Supt. David Quimio identified the body as that of Mark Stephen Bargueta, 25, of Barangay Bulihan, Silang, Cavite.

Quimio said the body was fished out by members of the police Maritime Group and the Coast Guard near a fish cage at about 7 a.m. in Taal Lake in Sitio Islang Pira-piraso, Barangay Bignay.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Fernandez; 60

ALOYSIUS Gonzaga ("Louie") A. Fernandez of Binangonan, Rizal, who died of cardiac arrest on Nov. 29, was buried on Wednesday, his family announced.

Mass was celebrated for Fernandez, 60, at the Binangonan Catholic Church.

He was cremated at 3 p.m. at Holy Gardens Memorial Park in Angono, Rizal.

Fernandez was the eldest son of the late Scoutmaster Librado Santos Fernandez who died with the Philippine Scouts Jamboree Team in a plane crash in Bombay, India, in 1963; and the late Josefina Angeles.

His wake was held at the family residence on 344 Paterno St., Binangonan, Rizal.

He is survived by his wife Nancy Villarin, children Luigi, Nini and Aris; grandchild Pot-pot; siblings Lulu, Chot, Margie, Agnes, Anne and Manny.

More polls coming

TACLOBAN CITY—The Commission on Elections in Eastern Visayas is ready for the special barangay elections in 17 villages on Dec. 15.

Comelec regional director Adolfo Ibañez said his office had completed all requirements, including security arrangements for the special polls.

Ibañez said the barangay elections in these villages held on Oct. 29 were disrupted by armed men in the barangays.

Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas

Cebu shooting suspect falls

CEBU CITY—Police on Monday arrested a suspect linked to the drive-by shootings here in October that killed three persons and wounded four others.

Authorities arrested Aristotle Aves, 26, allegedly of the Alpha Kappa Rho (Akhro) fraternity, on board the Super Shuttle Ferry 5, which was docked at Pier 8 in Mandaue City. The vessel was bound for Ormoc City and was scheduled to leave at 10 p.m. on Monday.

Aves was charged with three counts of murder and frustrated murder for the drive-by shootings that occurred late night on Oct. 4 and at dawn of Oct. 5.

Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas

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Pangasinan: Richest province so poor

Revenue share topnotcher has highest poverty rate in Ilocos region

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

POVERTY is a recurring theme in rallies and press conferences, such as this in Quezon City where empty plates were used to symbolize continuing hunger among millions in the country. JOAN BONDOC

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—Pangasinan may have the biggest slice in the internal revenue allotment (IRA) shared by provinces in the country but, ironically, it also has the highest poverty incidence in the Ilocos region.

This glaring contrast was evident in a presentation made here by the provincial government during an orientation on the provincial and local planning and expenditure management guidelines conducted by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Pangasinan's IRA for next year is P1.363 billion, leading an "elite group" of 13 billionaire provinces composed of Cebu, Negros Occidental, Bulacan, Quezon, Isabela, Palawan, Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, Nueva Ecija, Iloilo and Leyte, according to provincial administrator Rafael Baraan.

"Add to that the fact that Pangasinan has three of the most prominent leaders in this country—Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., former President Fidel Ramos and President Macapagal-Arroyo," Baraan said.

"Then it's really hard to explain why most, if not all, of the 13 provinces belonging to the billionaire's club are more progressive than Pangasinan," he said.

Poverty incidence in the province, according to Neda, was recorded at 25.8 percent among families, as against the region's 24 percent.

Among the population, the poverty posted an incidence of 31.7 percent, compared to the region's 30.2 percent. And yet, Baraan said, the province is the "food basket" of the region.

The office of the provincial agriculturist said that of the total regional production, Pangasinan produced 69 percent of rice, 62 percent of corn, 78 percent of sweet potatoes, 92 percent of eggplants, 89 percent of mangoes, and 77 percent of fish.

Baraan said it also boasts of two major power plants, with a combined generating capacity of 1,545 megawatts.

"But we don't have big industries operating to provide jobs and livelihood opportunities for our people, including the growing number of unemployed college and vocational [school] graduates," he said.

He said Pangasinan now had 123,000 unemployed people, the biggest in the region. Unemployment rate of 13.46 percent, he said.

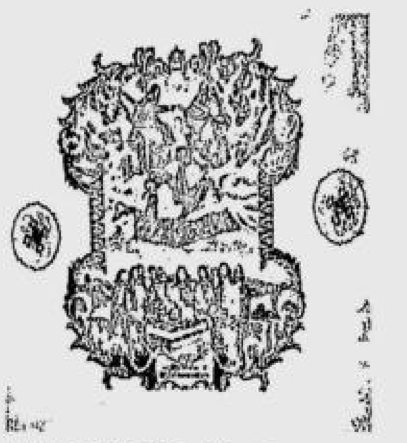
"We have a number of natural wonders and pilgrimage sites, but we are not able to attract that many foreign tourists the same way [less-endowed} provinces are able to do," he said.

Even the famed Hundred Islands Natural Park, he said, has failed to capture national and international attention the way Boracay Island in Aklan has fascinated tourists and investors.

"Indeed, there's a big job ahead of us and we need to put our acts together," Baraan said.

He said the most important job of the provincial government now was to create an environment to attract and sustain investments and other economic activities.

"If the people have stable jobs and other means of livelihood, they will become more capable and less dependent on the government," Baraan said.



THE PAINTING of the Coronation of Our Lady of Queen of Heaven and Earth situated at the ceiling top of the main altar of the San Juan de Sahagun Church, Candon City, Ilocos Sur.
LEONCIO BALBIN JR./INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Candon City church hosts 150-ft long oil painting

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

CANDON CITY—ADVENT means the start of the Christmas season and traditionally the time for Filipinos to start decorating their homes for the holidays.

The San Juan de Sahagun Church in this city may have the most spectacular Christmas decoration unveiled this Advent: two oil paintings on canvas almost 150 feet long and eight feet wide representing the 20 Mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

Fr. Vicente Avila, the priest overseeing the more than 400-year-old church, said these could be the longest religious oil painting in the country.

Avila said the ceiling was in a sorry state when he was assigned there in June last year. It was moldy and the two frescoes were beyond repair.

He wanted to put the Mysteries in the church and visited Catholic churches all over the country looking for ideas and inspiration.

He said he would like to feel the awe akin to gazing at the Sistine Chapel's ceiling where Michelangelo created immortal frescoes depicting scenes from the Book of Genesis.

He sought the help of his cousin, Mel Andino, an arts teacher at the University of Northern Philippines and a consultant of Vigan City, and they decided on oil on canvas that would later be glued.

They decided to place nine of the Sorrowful, Joyful, Glorious and Luminous Mysteries on each side of the ceiling, the "Institution of the Holy Eucharist" at the front of the panels, and the "Coronation of Our Lady" above the altar.

Each of the panels is eight feet tall and 16 feet long, which makes the figures life-sized. They are bordered in blue with trompe l'oeil (illusory effect of reality) decorations on the sides.

Andino also recommended his 28-year-old student, Redentor Castillo of Narvacan town, to paint the panels. The three chose the paintings they would place on the ceiling.

"I told him (Castillo) to follow the palette of [Italian Renaissance painter] Raphael," Andino said. "I also told him to base the paintings from the originals and not to totally copy them."

"I did some *dagdag-bawas* (padding and shaving)," said Castillo. He started painting in March at their house, assisted by his four brothers.

East Visayas reports sharp rise in copra, coconut income

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE PHILIPPINE Coconut Authority reported a sharp increase in coconut export earnings in Eastern Visayas in the first 10 months.

The earnings were already 60 percent higher than the region's export income in the entire 2006.

Benjamin Yu, PCA regional production and regulation officer, said export earnings from January to October had reached $76 million, or about 60 percent higher than the $47 million export income in the whole of last year.

"The increase was expected because Samar Coco Products (in Calbayog City in Samar) has started to export, as well as the new oil mill in Tolosa (Tacloban Oil Mill in Leyte)," Yu said.

He said early this year, these two oil mills did not export their products but instead concentrated on the domestic market.

"In the early part of this year, they did not export because prices in the local market was better (compared to those abroad)," Yu said.

In July, the two companies started exporting their products such as crude oil, cochin oil, refined oil, low color oil and copra cake.

According to Yu, the bulk of the exported products were crude coconut oil, which were sold mainly in Europe and the United States.

Since the volume and price of the products sold abroad this year were higher compared to last year's, PCA is expecting export sales this year to be more than double than earnings last year, Yu said.

Yu added the PCA was also expecting EC Global, an oil mill operating in Bay, Leyte to export before the year ends.

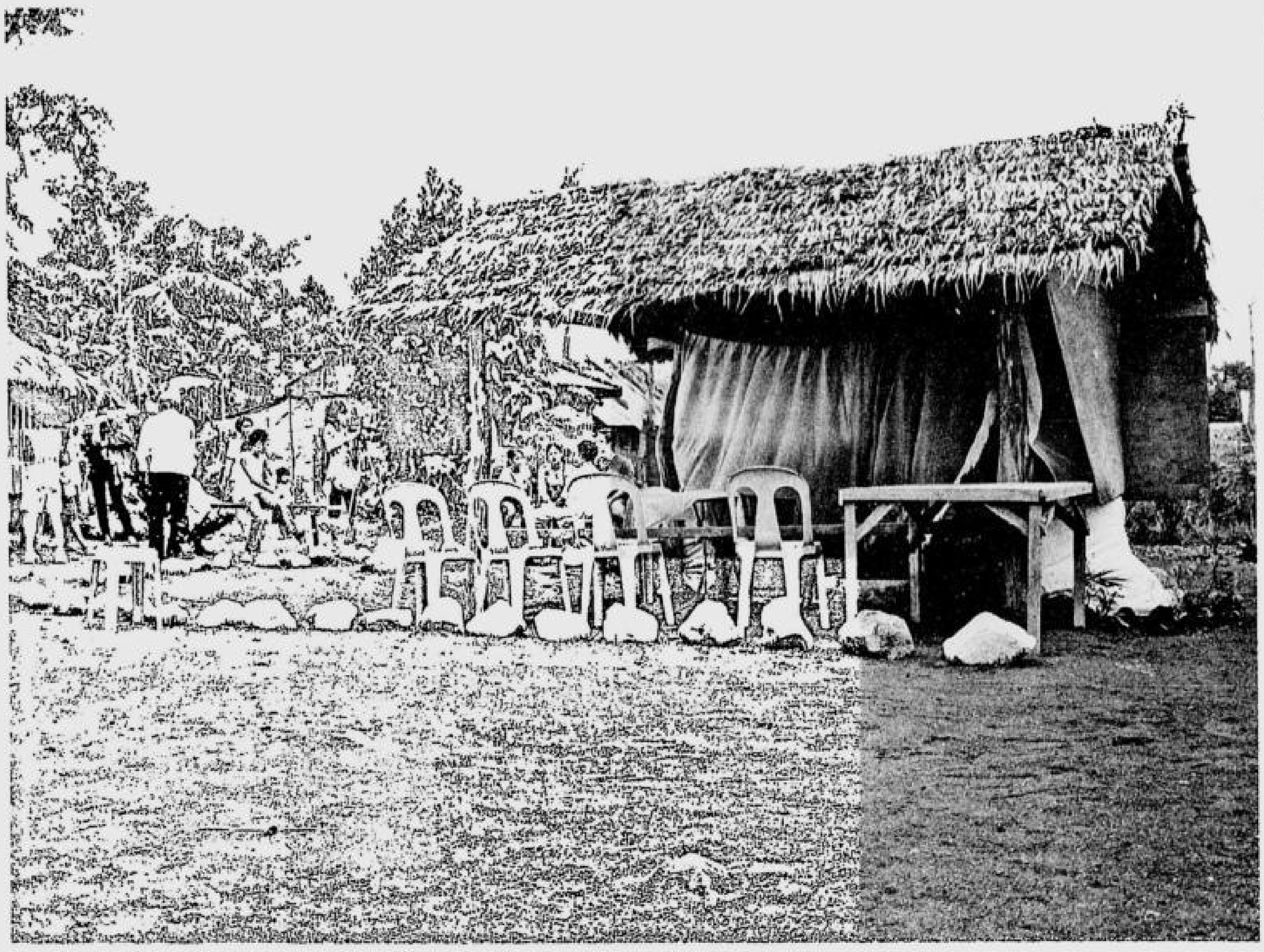
"We would possibly reach $100 million (export sales) by yearend," he added.

The region has four export oil mills: Leyte Oil Mill (Tanauan, Leyte), Samar Coco Products Manufacturing Corp. (Calbayog City), Tacloban Oil Mill (Tolosa, Leyte), and EC Global (Baybay, Leyte).

Other oil mills in Eastern Visayas sell their products in the domestic market. These are Sanvic in San Isidro, Northern Samar; Unex and YKS in Tacloban City; and the Visayan Oil Mill in Baybay, Leyte.

Farmers are enjoying high copra prices.

Yu said the prevailing price of copra in the region was now P28 per kg. This might hit P30 per kg, he said.



ONCE A NEIGHBORHOOD EPHRAIM AGUILAR/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

A hut where Mass was celebrated Nov. 30 in honor of those who died in the onslaught of flood and lahar from Mayon volcano rises in Barangay Padang, Legazpi City. It was built on top of what once was a thriving neighborhood that was erased from the map by the 2006 disaster.

Quezon reporter decries casing, harassment

LUCENA CITY—A REPORTER has gone into hiding after men believed to be military agents were found casing her.

Criselda Cabangon, 24, who works at the "Ang Diaryo Natin" (ADN), said her neighbors had informed her of unidentified men asking for her whereabouts.

Cabangon, who is also a member of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), said she felt threatened so she left her house and sought refuge in a friend's house.

"This is blatant media harassment to intimidate me and other fellow provincial journalists," Cabangon said.

The military's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom), based in Camp Nakar here, denied that it was after Cabangon.

In a statement, Army Maj. Randolph Cabangbang, Solcom spokesperson said: "We do not know her (Cabangon), much less plan to apprehend her for whatever reason."

Cabangon is a former student leader and campus journalist at Enverga University here.

On Tuesday, Cabangon appeared at the ADN and NUJP office, still shaken and wearing the same house dress since Monday.

NUJP officials accompanied Cabangon back to her house on the outskirts.

Cabangbang said the men casing her could just be posing as soldiers.

"We advise people to be vigilant and report suspicious-looking persons to the police or the military," he said.

"If they suspect a particular unit, it is best that they confront the officer in charge. We are more than willing to help."

NUJP officials said they would request for a dialogue with the Solcom on Cabangon's case.

"We can't afford to be complacent and just casually sweep the incident under the rug," said an NUJP official. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Cordillera folk told: Water districts are crucial

BUGUIAS, BENGUET—CORDILLERA officials must consider the formation of water districts as a measure to protect the region's remaining watersheds and avert a shortage of potable water, a top official of the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) said.

Edgardo Demayo, LWUA manager for Luzon's water district development division, said his agency would extend technical and financial assistance to water districts because they are considered as government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs).

"But they are treated as independent and autonomous, leaving the stakeholders the freedom to manage their water distribution system," he said.

Water manager

Demayo explained the role of water districts in water resources management at the Benguet State University (BSU) Loo campus here on Saturday before farmers, local officials and proponents of the Bakun, Buguias, Atok, Tublay, Kibungan and Kapangan Metro Water District (BATKMWD).

The BATKMWD aims to establish a community-based water distribution system in the six towns anchored on watershed protection. The proposed water district would also venture in commercial water distribution and coffee plantation business.

The BATKMWD, according to civic leader Norbert Pontin Guives, would service the six towns' 120,019 residents in 59 villages.

The six towns, with a combined land area of 98,090 hectares, have four major river systems.

Awareness

Guives said the water district, expected to be completed by 2015, would make farmers aware of their obligation to responsibly manage their water systems.

Seven groups are leading the water district's formation—the Cordillera Indigenous Cultural Communities Foundation, VET Educational Center, Center for Cultural Communities Development, Indigenous Peoples Council, Indigenous Mt. Province Advocates of Peace and Unity, Kapangan District Teachers and Employees Credit Cooperative, and the Kibungan Indigenous Peoples Organization.

The BATKMWD symposium here came on the heels of an Asian Development Bank (ADB) report that the country's water resources are fast deteriorating due to rapid urbanization.

The report said only 33 percent of the country's river systems remained as suitable water sources and 58 percent of groundwater have already been contaminated.

Demayo said only less than 500 of the country's more than 1,500 cities and towns have good water systems set in place by water districts.

"It's still a long way for our communities to realize the need to have a good source of water and water distribution system," he said. *Delmar Cariño, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Congressman opposes plan to reclaim river for squatters' homes

By Felipe V. Celino
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—A CONGRESSman has demanded a stop to a reclamation project in a river here that, he said, could cause heavy flooding.

The reclamation project in Barangay Culasi, Rep. Antonio del Rosario said, was sure to bring silt that would clog the waterway.

The production of fishponds along the river would also suffer, Del Rosario said.

City Mayor Vicente Bermejo has proposed the 150,000-square-meter reclamation project in Barangay Culasi to serve as relocation site for around 3,000 squatters.

Bermejo said a survey done last week by a team showed that filling the area would not cause flooding.

He also expressed confidence that he could get the approval of the Philippine Reclamation Authority.

The city council is set to pass a resolution asking the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to grant an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) to the proposed project.

Del Rosario, however, said the city government should instead just buy land for the relocation of squatters.

He said that contrary to Bermejo's claim, an assessment conducted by the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (Penro) in October showed there would be flooding when heavy rains and high tide occur simultaneously in the area.

The Penro, in a report dated Oct. 25, 2007, also found that an area along the river had already been filled with materials that could be used to build a three-meter wide road.

It recommended that the city government follow all the regulations governing the issuance of permits for reclamation projects. It cited the need for a survey and a feasibility study to determine the extent and suitability of the project site.

USED STUFF DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Hand-me-down stuff toys surface at ambulant vendor's spot on Uyanguren Street, Davao City, indicating that Filipinos who could ill afford new clothes also turn to used toys for cheap playthings for their children.

Court acts on 'amparo' for alleged NPA tax man

LUCENA CITY—THE REGIONAL trial court (RTC) here has directed military and police officials to respond to a petition for a writ of amparo filed by the son of an alleged New People's Army tax collector in Quezon who was earlier arrested by government forces.

Lawyer Rey Oliver Alejandrino said Judge Bienvenido Mapaye of RTC-Branch 55 granted the writ upon the petition of Rafael David, son of arrested rebel leader Dindo David.

The respondents included Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Obaniana, commander of the military's Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) based in Camp Nakar here; Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, Philippine Army chief; 1st Lt. Norleo Addulam, team leader of the Army's 1st Special Forces Company; and Supt. Ronaldo Ilagan, city police chief.

Alejandrino said the hearing was scheduled for today.

Contrary to popular perception that the writ only applies to extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, Alejandrino explained that the court order also protected a detainee from being subjected to further violation of his civil and human rights.

"That's the main objective of the writ that we have filed. Dindo's family wants to secure that his safety and his civil rights will no longer be violated," the lawyer told the INQUIRER.

A military report said David, alias "Ka Elex," was allegedly a ranking official of the NPA's "White Area Committee" in the province and the one supposedly in charge of the collection of financial resources for the use of communist rebels in Quezon.

Yesterday, Army Maj. Randolph Cabangbang, Solcom spokesperson, said David was also a member of the executive committee of the Quezon Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

David's common-law wife Tina said she would also file a complaint for the illegal arrest of her husband and for the harassment and violence the government forces inflicted on them, especially their 22-year-old son Daniel who was born with cerebral palsy.

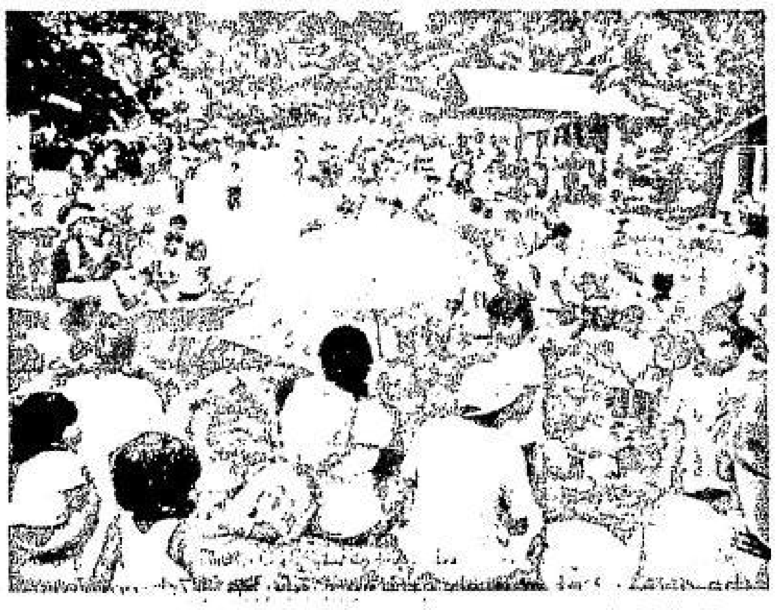
She said that minutes after David's arrest, armed civilians forcibly opened their door and carried Daniel into the waiting vehicle outside.

"Perhaps out of pity for Daniel's condition, one of them stopped our impending arrest and brought back my son inside the house," Tina said.

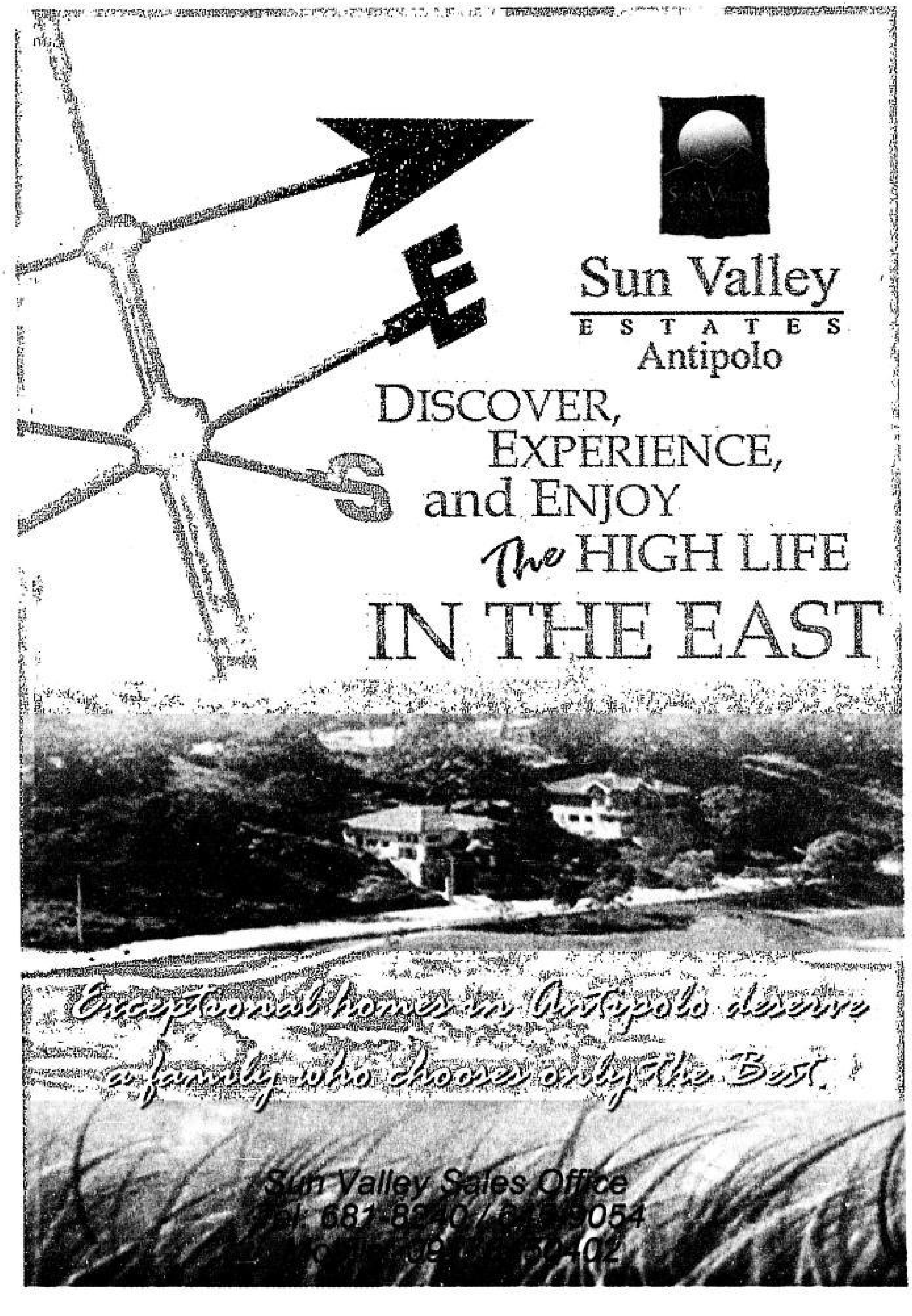
She said their son got sick after the incident and was rushed to the hospital.

When contacted, Cabangbang said the military had yet to receive a copy of the court summons.

"Rest assured that the military will faithfully comply with the court order," Cabangbang said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*



SOME of the casualties of the war on insurgency are tribal folk, like these Manobos, who are forced to flee their homes for fear of getting caught in the crossfire. CHRIS PANGANIBAN/INQUIRER MINDANAO



Baguio church execs join 'BMW' to oppose car plan

BAGUIO CITY—Church leaders are riding in a "BMW" to City Hall to stop officials from implementing a car plan for the city's top two officials and councilors.

"BMW" stands for the Baguio Muna Watchdog, which met for the first time at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines to monitor the city government's fund allotments and purchases.

The car plan drew public outrage two weeks ago after news leaked out that a proposed resolution included it in Ordinance 57, an appropriations measure for the city's remaining share from the year's internal revenue allotment (IRA).

Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. vetoed the resolution, citing auditing rules that disallow car plans although some councilors said all they intended was to buy for each councilor his or her own service vehicle.

The council on Monday overrode Bautista's veto, but promised to set aside their service vehicle allotments of about P19.6 million in favor of "more pressing" requirements, such as dump trucks to complement the city's waste segregation and collection program.

Rev. Simplicio Dang-awan Jr. of the UCCP said religious leaders had joined graduate students of the University of the Cordilleras and members of militant groups to make sure that the council stuck to its promise.

A councilor even apologized for her decision to support the plan.

Councilor Betty Lourdes Tabanda, a former vice mayor, was the lone member of the council to vote against the override.

She said many councilors were urged to support the car plan as a gesture of "*pakikisama* (peer pressure)."

Councilor Erdolfo Balajadia, the council's spokesperson, said Bautista was aware that the body intended to copy the car plan used by the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

The judiciary allows government employees to buy vehicles issued to them "at book value," Balajadia said.

The council is drafting a resolution that would realign the P19.6 million for the construction of a composting facility.

Church leaders said they also wanted to use the BMW to mend the fences that were broken when Bautista and the councilors clashed over the car plan. *Vincent Cabreza and Donna Demetillo, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

BAGUIO residents take part in a march to usher in the Yuletide spirit in the city that some councilors might have taken to mean giving gifts to themselves through a controversial car plan.

INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

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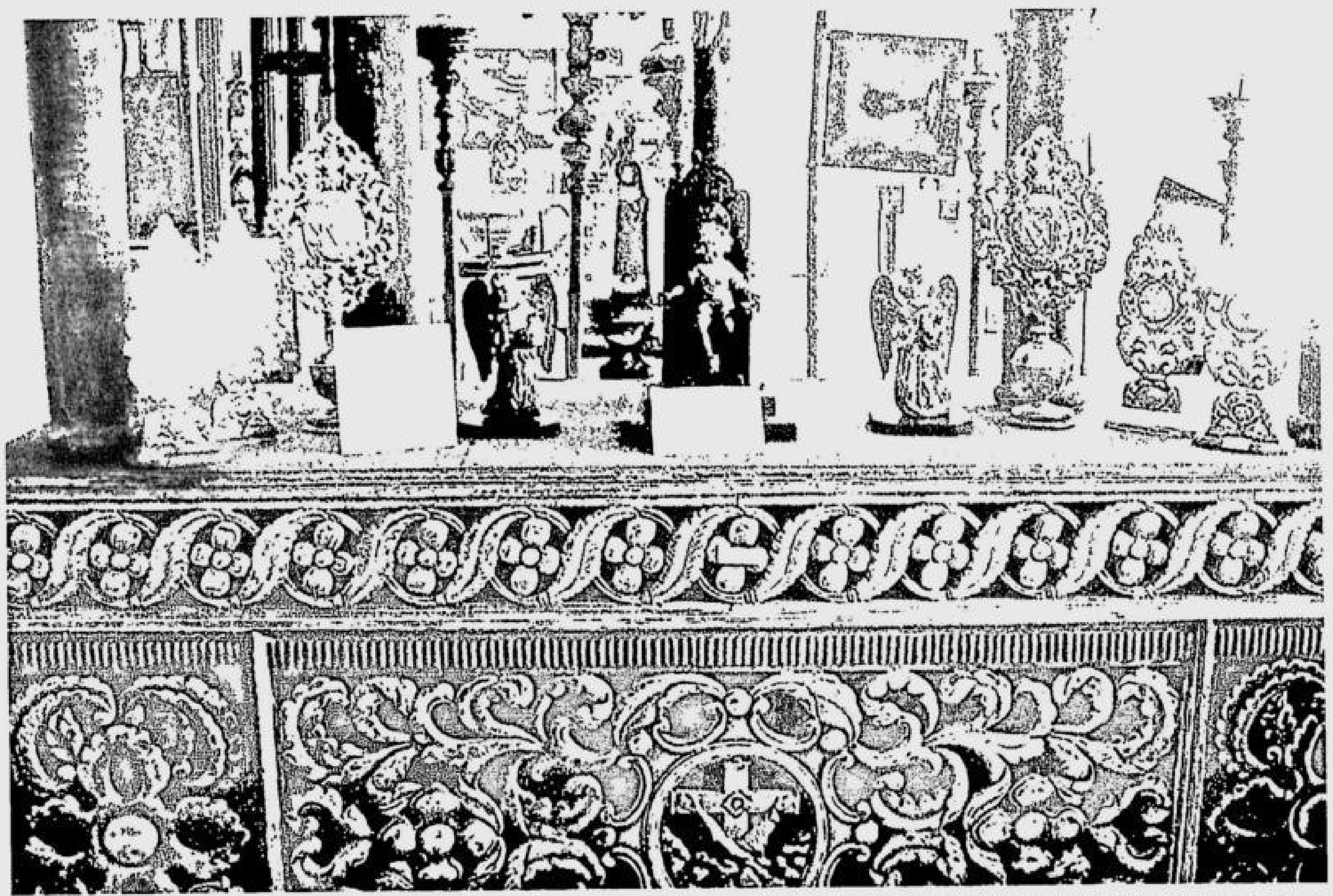


PAINTED saints believed to bring relief to problems of churchgoers are featured in relief panels known as *"retablo"* that represent church artifacts of the 17th-century Archdiocese of Caceres.

PHOTOS BY JUAN ESCANDOR JR.

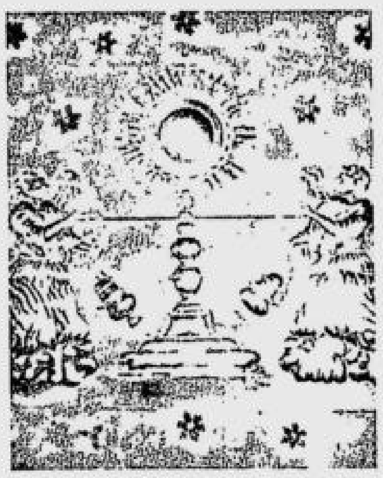
17th-century artistry in Naga church artifacts

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Naga City

ALTAR PIECES IN OLD SILVER EMBOSSED WITH intricate designs dominate a small museum in Naga City in Camarines Sur, providing a glimpse of the artistry of church artifacts of the 17th-century Archdiocese of Caceres.

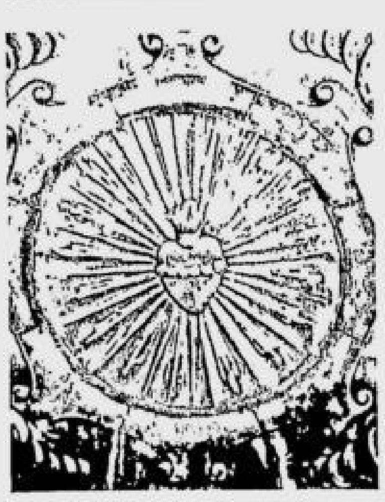
Fabie Arejola, curator of the Museo del Seminario Conciliar de Nueva Caceres, said the *"retablo"* items reflected the style of that period when priests delivered Masses in Latin, with their backs before churchgoers.

A *retablo* is "a portable, flat, two-dimensional painted wood or relief panel" behind the altar that depicts saints. It is believed to bring relief to the problems of churchgoers, according to a museum literature.



DETAILS of *guion* or processional banner.

FRANCISCAN Tau Cross of the *retablo* from Goa.



A UNIQUE design for an altar piece.

Its origin is traced to the South American Roman Catholics.

The two *retablo* pieces on display in the museum are made of old silver sheets embossed with religious symbols and icons instead of painted saints. They came from the towns of Goa and Canaman in Camarines Sur.

The three-piece, five-meter *retablo* from Canaman has three panels, each embossed with a central religious symbol.

Arejola said the use of the silver in the art work established a Church prescription for materials to be used for altars, Mass and ritual vessels long before marble became popular.

The Goa *retablo* is a single panel that uses the Franciscan Tau (last letter of the Hebrew alphabet) Cross, a crucifix where the crucified left hand represented Jesus Christ and the right hand, St. Francis of Asisi, the central religious symbol.

Birth of diocese

According to Prof. Danilo Gerona, a Bicol historian, the Franciscans, together with the Augustinians, founded the Catholic communities in the region, which later became parishes.

Because of their pioneering missionary work, Pope Clement VII proclaimed on Aug. 14, 1595, the diocese of Caceres in the Bull of Erection of the See of Caceres, Gerona revealed. It was also in this year that the first cathedral in Naga was constructed.

Headed by a bishop, the diocese once covered the entire Bicol peninsula, the two islands of Catanduanes and Masbate, Ticao and Burias islands, and some of the parishes of Quezon province.

Arejola said the church vessels used in the rituals and Masses were categorized based on prescribed materials: Gold for major vessels, or the ones that directly touch the host and wine; and silver for other vessels.

"So chalices and ciborium, the host container, must be made of gold," she said as she gave examples of the major vessels.

One interesting piece is a processional banner (*guion*) inlaid with two angels holding incense burners before a monstrance, a sunburst-shaped vessel with hallowed middle where a host is mounted. The guion is a religious artifact used during procession since the medieval times.

Historical landmark

Arejola said the collection of church artifacts celebrated the declaration of the Holy Rosary Minor Seminary by the National Historical Institute as a national historical landmark.

The seminary, originally named Seminario Conciliar de Nueva Caceres, was founded on March 7, 1793, by Archbishop Antonio Gallego of Manila, then the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Caceres, according to Gerona.

He said the first schoolhouse was made of wood, bamboo and nipa shingles, but it was razed during an earthquake in 1863.

The reconstructed building, which still stands today, was opened on May 7, 1865, under the administration of the Vincentian priests, with a certain Fr. Idelfonso Moral as rector. A certain Fr. Antonio Santonja supervised its construction.

Gerona said the enrollment fluctuated from 50 to 80 students, of which only 25 percent reached ordination.

Among the prominent students of the seminary were Gen. Simeon Ola, the last Filipino general who surrendered to the Americans, Jose Panganiban and the 13 Bicol martyrs who were executed on Jan. 3, 1897, in Bagumbayan.

'Komiks' boosts drive to protect Banahaw

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
Sariaya, Quezon

IT TOOK SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE CARMEN Cabling was able to publish the first edition of Banahaw (Komiks-Pahayagan Para sa Kalikasan) last year but the challenge of producing another one and being able to distribute copies to communities around Mt. Banahaw before this year is over does not faze her.

"*Komiks* has its own intrinsic charm of tapping the pulse of the people," said Cabling, 40, a freelance writer for the movies and television.

Sometime in 1999, when the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) commissioned Cabling to conduct a postproject evaluation for the nongovernment Luntiang Alyansa para sa Bundok Banahaw (LABB), she learned that the main problem of advocacy work on Banahaw protection was the lack of information materials.

"The newsletters about Banahaw were not being read," she said.

As early as 2000, Cabling wanted to produce a *komiks* material but the cost and effort required to put one out held her back.

It was not until 2004, however, after conducting another evaluation, when the FPE gave her the go-signal to come out with a *komiks* about the mountain.

The foundation funded the initial costs of printing 5,000 copies while she solicited funds from former Sariaya Mayor Connie Doromal and district Rep. Proceso Alcala for the project's other expenses.

The final copy of the 34-page *komiks* contained four short stories, one of them a cartoon story with mountain animals as characters.

Another story focuses on Unyo, a farmer whose desire to provide for his family led him to illegal logging.

Banahaw nymphs befriended and enlightened his young son Boying, who appealed to his father to put a stop to his destructive livelihood activity.

There is also a centerfold story on a House bill that seeks to declare Banahaw as a legislated protected landscape.

All the stories were written by Cabling with art works by known illustrator Nestor Malgapo.

"My goal is to reach out to every member of the community, especially those living around Mt. Banahaw," said Cabling.

A marketing graduate of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines with a five-year stint as junior account executive with a global advertising firm, Cabling said her love for the medium was greatly influenced by her uncle Mario Cabling, a noted *komiks* writer and author.

She said another inspiration for her work on Banahaw Komiks was Dr. Cecilia Gascon's book, which enumerated the rich biodiversity of Banahaw.

"It's a beautiful book, full of data on Banahaw, which people should know about, and the challenge was how to make the information accessible to people," she said.

Gascon is the president of the Southern Luzon State University in Lucban, Quezon.

Environmental education

Thus far, an environmental lawyer and a school principal found the *komiks* a good tool for environmental education.

"Would you believe that many people were surprised when they read from the *komiks* that Mt. Banahaw is an active volcano. All along they thought it is just a mountain," said Cabling.

Covering 11,133.3 hectares, Mt. Banahaw lies southeast of Manila within the municipalities of Lucban, Tayabas, Sariaya, Candelaria and Dolores in Quezon and parts of the municipalities of Rizal, Nagcarlan, Liliw and Majayjay and San Pablo City in Laguna province

According to Cabling, the *komiks* material is being used by the Protected Area Management Board in its education, information and communication campaign in the peripheries of the mountain.

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CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL
"Magazine Retailers & Newspaper Vendors Holiday"
December 5-6, 2007
Dec. 5 - News and Information Reading Caravan Assembly Time: 7:00am
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'Adeste Fideles' concert opens Christmas season at PICC

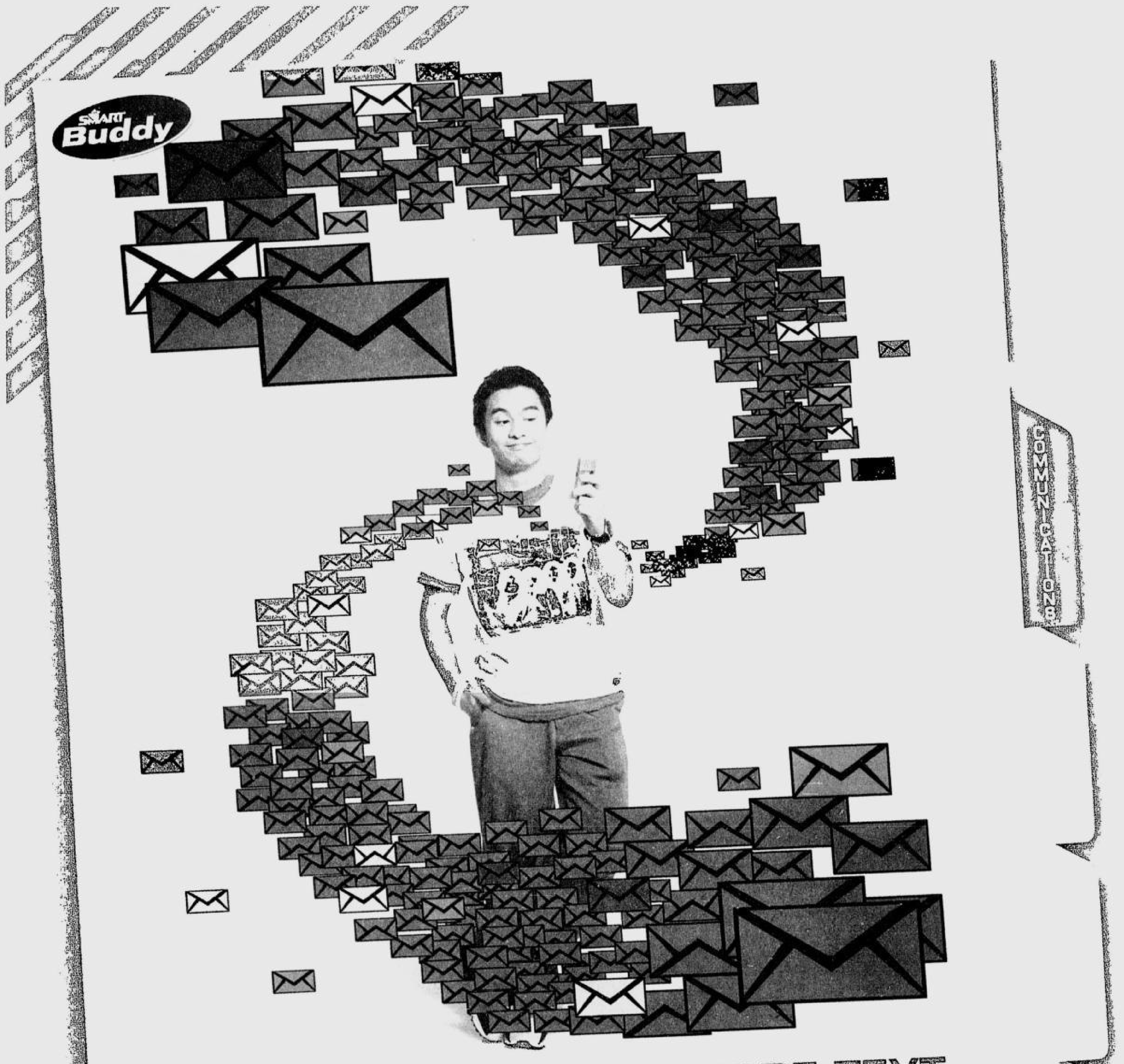
WITH HANDEL'S GLORIOUS "Messiah" in the air, a group of civic-minded business groups on Tuesday declared the Christmas season "open" in Metro Manila with the annual concert "Adeste Fideles."

Featuring Rachelle Gerodias and Nolyn Cabahug, the concert also featured foreign-trained Filipino classical singers, who seldom performed for Manila audiences.

Launched only last year at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes, this year's Adeste Fideles was moved to Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) where the acoustics was better.

Eddie Yap, concert producer, said the success of the concert last year inspired the group to "stage an even better concert" this year.

The concert was for the benefit of PinoyME, a microfinance program organized by former President Corazon Aquino, the Management Educators Workshop (MEW) of the Management Association of the Philippines and several children's and soldiers' charity groups.



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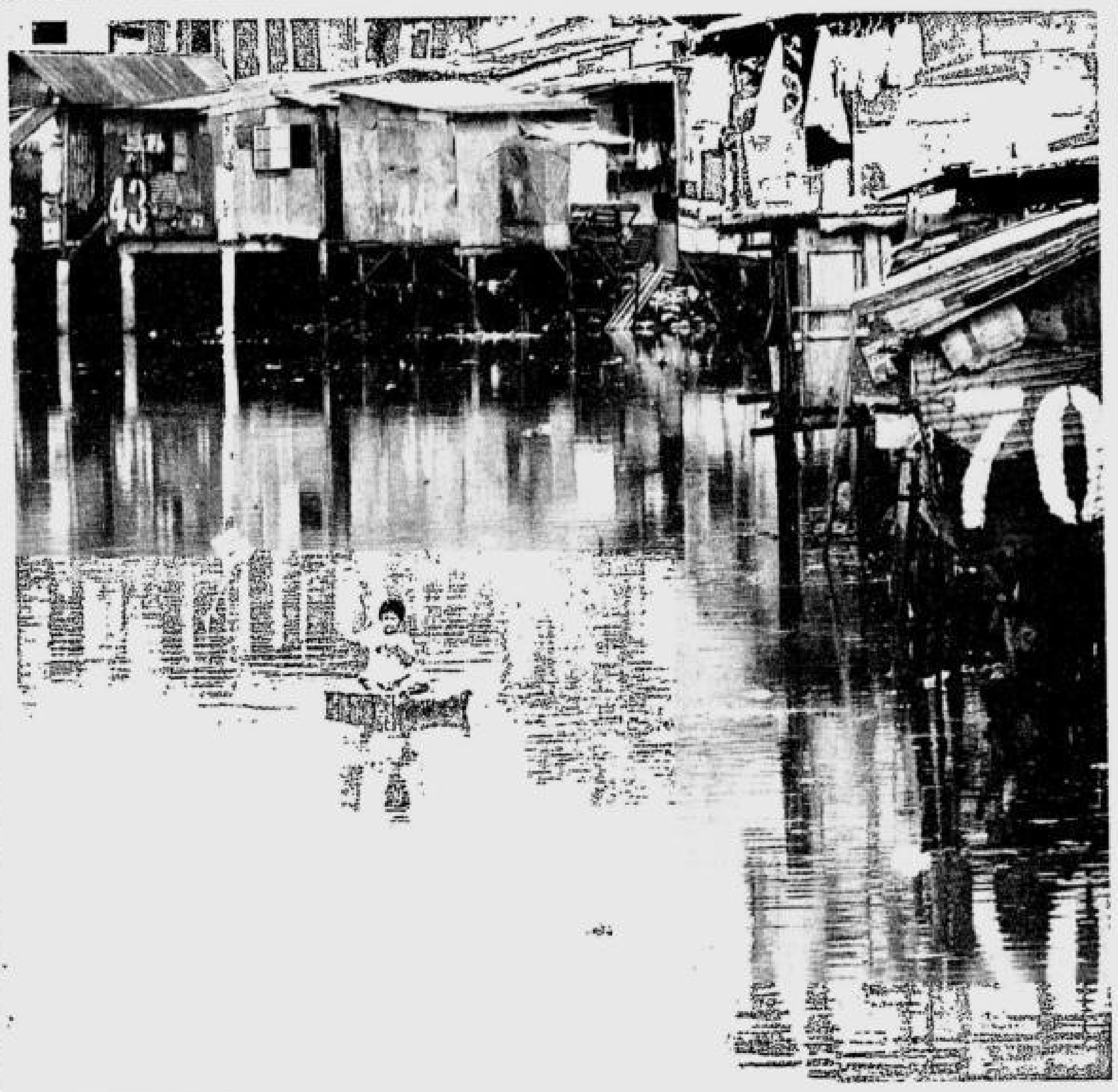
DID YOU KNOW

ON DEC. 7, 1932, University of the Philippines law student Wenceslao Q. Vinzons, after whom a building at UP Diliman was later named, led a large group of students from Manila colleges and universities in protesting provisions in the appropriations act that increased the salaries of certain government officials.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

Revilla, Manzano clash anew over raid

Makati mall antipiracy operation revives 'feud' between actors



TRY THIS ONE
A boy flies a kite on board a makeshift raft on the Maricaban Creek in Pasay City. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Dona Pazzibugan
and Bayani San Diego Jr.

ACTION STAR-TURNED-Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. yesterday blamed fellow actor and television host Edu Manzano for what he called a botched raid on a Makati City mall where pirated video and music discs were being sold.

Last Wednesday, Revilla, who chairs the Senate committee on public information and mass media, joined a team of Optical Media Board agents who raided the Makati Cinema Square on Chino Roces Avenue.

When the team got to the mall, however, most of the stalls were empty.

The OMB team was supposed to go to another pirated video discs "hot spot" in Quiapo, Manila, according to Revilla, but decided to cancel the operation.

"Chairman Manzano has a lot of explaining to do and it should start from his last-minute backing out from appearing in the raid. He said he was sick. It's absurd that he had a quick recovery," said Revilla in a statement.

REVILLA

MANZANO

Revilla was Manzano's predecessor in the OMB which was previously called the Video Regulatory Board. The two had previously tangled over the OMB's performance in raiding establishments or places where pirated music and film discs are sold.

The proliferation of pirated discs is being blamed for the huge losses suffered by the local movie and recording industries.

Revilla justified his participation in the raid, saying he was the chair of the joint congressional oversight committee on the OMB.

"He (Manzano) must know that there is an oversight committee. Was he embarrassed about the outcome of the operation that's why he is reacting? I just said I was not satisfied," said Revilla.

During his morning television show yesterday, Manzano defended himself, saying that Revilla's participation in Wednesday's raid was not properly coordinated with the OMB.

He added that when the senator arrived at the Makati Cinema Square, the raid was already over.

Manzano also denied that he backed out at the last minute because of an illness. "It was OMB Executive Director Rosendo Meneses who said that I was at the hospital, but I wasn't sick. Later, I was at the OMB office, meeting with people and signing documents."

He explained that he "didn't agree to raid Quiapo because we only had 50 people. When Revilla was OMB head, he sent 200 people there."

Of Revilla's criticisms, Manzano asserted, "We are just doing our job. We are commended all over the world, except in our own country."

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Mayor cites Palace ruling on jurisdiction over landfills

By Kristine L. Alave

THE TOWN OF RODRIGUEZ IN Rizal province—and not the provincial government—has jurisdiction over the two solid waste landfills in its area, its mayor said, citing an order from Malacañang.

Mayor Pedro Cuerpo yesterday welcomed the order from the Office of the President upholding his town's authority over landfills.

He said the ruling should serve as a "guide" for other entities like the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the provincial government of Rizal. "Now, we know our rights," Cuerpo said.

In the order, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita cited the Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160) which provides that "the duty to provide a solid waste disposal system is devolved only to municipalities and that the Sangguniang Bayan is the one vested with the power to approve ordinances providing for the efficient and effective system of solid waste and garbage collection and disposal."

Ermita declared that "the province cannot arrogate upon itself the authority to allow the operations of a solid waste disposal facility in the guise of doing it under the general welfare clause. The power of each LGU (province, city, municipality) are clearly granted and differentiated in the Local Government Code."

"Thus, since the power to regulate solid waste disposal is vested in the Sangguniang Bayan, the issuance of permits which is inherent in the power to regulate may be exercised by the municipal mayor as local chief executive," he stated.

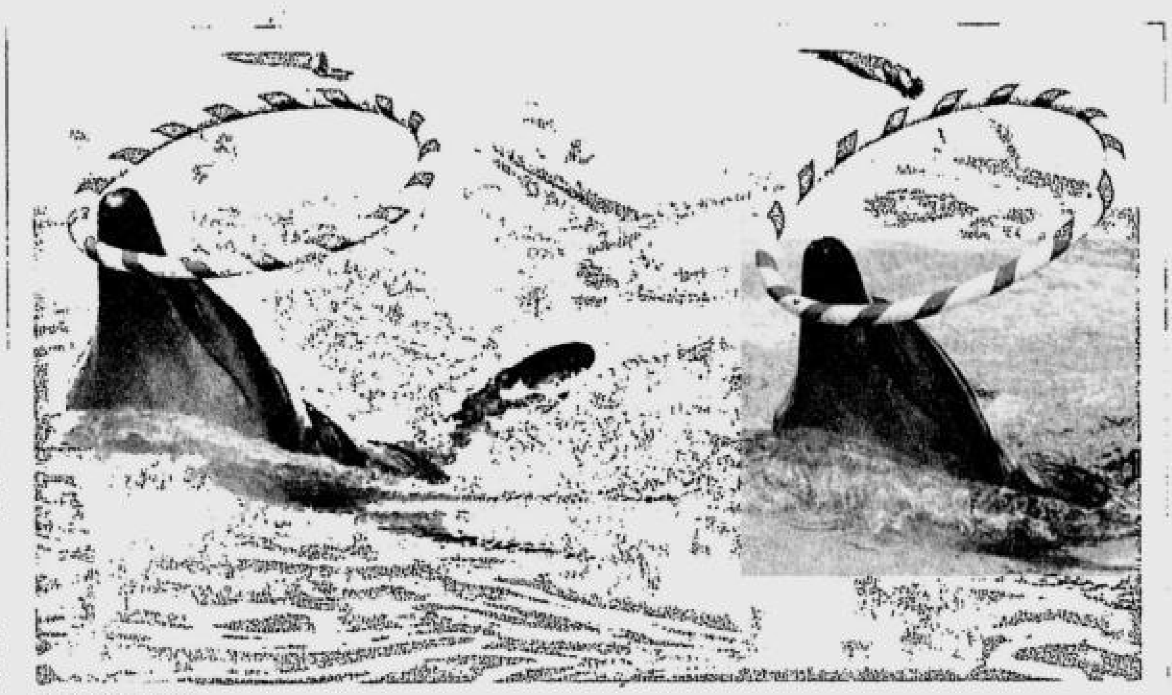
Cuerpo said the order should settle the dispute between the town and the provincial government, which recently authorized the opening of a 19-hectare landfill in the town without his approval.

He added that the Palace directive voided Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares III's order for the closure of the smaller 14-hectare dump operated by Rodriguez town.

The fight between Cuerpo and Ynares last October almost led to a garbage crisis in Metro Manila as the majority of the trash generated by residents in the metropolis are sent to the Rodriguez dumps.

Reached for comment, Ynares told the INQUIRER that he had yet to see in full Ermita's order. He also downplayed its implications, saying it was a "mere reply to Mayor Cuerpo's personal inquiry."

"We will seek a clarification from Malacañang since our side was never heard," he said.



SIDESHOW
Two bottlenose dolphins, Tutti and Frutti, entertain visitors at the Metrowalk Commercial Complex in Pasig City.
JOAN BONDOC

DPWH takes down unsafe, illegal giant billboards in Metro Manila

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE SUCCESSION OF TYPHOONS in the country in recent weeks has prompted the Department of Public Works and Highways to begin dismantling unsafe and illegal billboards in Metro Manila.

Director Emmanuel Cuntapay of the DPWH National Building Code Development Office said the agency took down billboards in the Morayta and Lerma areas in Manila yesterday morning.

He said that among these billboards were the Elev 8 billboard on Quezon Boulevard, the United Neon Billboard Frame on Edsa corner F.B. Harrison in Pasay City, and two roof signs on Quezon Avenue corner Edsa in Quezon City.

"Most of the dismantled billboards were constructed on the road right-of-way," Cuntapay said in a phone interview.

"Structures that are deemed unsafe and do not have the necessary permits will be removed," he added.

The DPWH official said they asked the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Philippine National Police to assist them in managing traffic during their dismantling operations.

Cuntapay added that after the issuance of the additional guidelines—promulgated in coordination with billboard owners, advertisers and local building officials—the DPWH and local building officials now have more defined guidelines in regulating the billboard industry to ensure public safety.

He said that out of the 6,409 billboards that they had inspected, 4,412 have been found to be unsafe and illegal and were later taken down by the DPWH.

The agency started its crackdown on illegal billboards last year after winds spawned by Typhoon "Milenyo" toppled a billboard which fell on a van in Makati City, leaving a man dead.

CA upholds conviction of paralytic

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHATEVER LITTLE RESPECT and trust I had left in the Court of Appeals flew out the window yesterday when I learned that the appellate court upheld the decision of a lower court convicting a complete paralytic of rape.

Jeff Quesada, 34, a quadriplegic, has been languishing at the National Penitentiary for more than a year after he was sentenced to life imprisonment for rape.

A quadriplegic is a person whose four limbs—both hands and feet—cannot move.

Jeff can't go to the bathroom without being bodily carried by two men. He has to be spoonfed when he eats because he can't hold his spoon and lift his hand.

How can a guy in such a condition be able to commit rape?

I have several times asked the CA justices reviewing Jeff's conviction to go to the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) and see his condition for themselves.

But my sources at NBP said nobody from the appellate court had gone to see Jeff.

Was it such big trouble for these justices to go to the Muntinlupa prisons and have a glimpse of Jeff?

I am not a lawyer, but I was told by a prominent magistrate, now deceased, that appreciation of a case is basically common sense.

Common sense would have told the justices that it was impossible for Jeff to have committed rape given his condition.

* * *

I began losing my respect and trust for the Court of Appeals when I heard from some appellants themselves and their lawyers that they paid huge sums for their cases to be resolved in their favor.

I was told the names of some CA justices who allegedly received bribes, but, of course, I can't mention their names here because I don't have concrete evidence.

But my information comes from very reliable sources—erstwhile appellants and lawyers who have had dealings with the appellate court.

These corrupt justices comprise the majority of the appellate court.

* * *

Except for the officers of the Performance Investment Products Corp. (PIPC), most of the persons charged before the Department of Justice by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) are innocent.

The PIPC reportedly gypped its investors of $250 million.

Its chair, Singaporean Michael H.K. Liew, as well as his Filipino partners, have disappeared.

My friend, Mayenne Carmona, was included in the SEC charge sheet.

But how could Mayenne have committed large-scale estafa when she herself was a victim?

She is neither an agent or employee of PIPC. She lost millions of pesos investing with PIPC.

"I invested in the company nine years ago and was getting good returns. Because of my good returns and my faith in the company, I would mention it to some of my friends who were interested in putting their money in products that gave good interests," Mayenne said.

* * *

Some people just don't know how to wield power.

Perhaps my long-time friend, Director General Sonny Razon, newly appointed chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP), is one of them.

I was disappointed by Razon's shabby treatment of reporters who covered the Peninsula incident last Thursday.

Until last Thursday, Razon was friendly with the media.

Here's my text message to Sonny Razon on my reaction to his men's rough treatment of journalists: "sonny, this is mon tulfo. what happened to the media-friendly police official i knew from way back? suddenly he has become confrontational with media. he no longer returns calls from his friends in media. i've been calling you but you no longer answer calls.

ah, but i know what has happened to you, sonny! i understand bcoz i've known persons like you. it's power. power has made u arrogant."

Nanny's plan to abduct ward foiled

By Tina G. Santos

HER DESIRE TO WIN BACK HER FORMER live-in partner drove a 25-year-old nanny to kidnap the 1-year-old boy she was taking care of in Quezon City last week.

National Bureau of Investigation agents, however, were able to rescue the boy from the house of the suspect, Nova Rance, in Davao City on Nov. 30.

Rance was subsequently charged with kidnapping and qualified theft in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

The charges stemmed from a complaint filed by the boy's parents, who said that they hired the suspect to take of their son in July. On Nov. 28, however, Rance left the couple's house in Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City. Apart from her ward, she allegedly took with her P12,000 in cash and P40,000 worth of jewelry belonging to her employers.

The boy's parents later reported their son's disappearance to the NBI which was able to trace the suspect's whereabouts.

Rance admitted to reporters yesterday that she took the boy because she wanted to win back her former boyfriend by telling him the child was theirs.

METROBRIEFS

Waterless areas in Manila

MAYNILAD Water yesterday said that some areas in Manila would have low pressure to no water for six hours starting at 10 p.m. today until 4 a.m. tomorrow. The water interruption is due to the installation of various district meters on Blumentritt, Oroquieta, Dimasalang, Laonlaan, Calamba and Antipolo streets. Areas that will have no water for six hours are those bounded by Florentino, A. H. Lacson, Dapitan, Bambang, Yakal, Ipil, Rizal Avenue, Aurora and A. Maceda streets. Affected customers are advised to store water good for the duration of the water service interruption. They may also call the Maynilad Water Hotline 1626 or 4362000.

Tina G. Santos

Fraternity official gunned down

A 41-YEAR-OLD official of a fraternity was killed by a man in front of his house before noon yesterday in Quezon City. Emmanuel Doctolero, the Barangay Commonwealth chapter founder of the Tau Gamma Phi, was shot twice in the head and died on the spot. He was grilling food with some friends and other frat members in front of his house on Casuy Street in Barangay Commonwealth when a blue motorcycle with a man and a woman on board stopped nearby. The man got off the motorcycle, approached Doctolero, shot him and then escaped. The victim had survived an attempt on his life on Aug. 1 last year. Police are looking into the possibility that the same people were behind the two attacks.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Fire hits house in Mandaluyong

A FIRE broke out in a house in Mandaluyong City yesterday morning. FO2 Marcos Cabiso said the blaze started in the attic of a multi-story house on Athena Loop St., Palladium Subdivision in Mandaluyong City at around 8:30 a.m. The fire, which reached the third alarm, was put out an hour later. Cabiso said they have yet to determine the exact cause of the fire, although he noted that there were flammable materials stored in the attic. Nobody was hurt or killed in the fire which ate the second floor. According to Cabiso, the damage to property was estimated at around P100,000. He added that the house was registered to a company owned by Luis Tan who was not at home when the fire started.

Kristine L. Alave

SANTA IS A COP
To add to the holiday cheer, policemen wearing Santa Claus hats are back in the streets this Christmas season.
JOAN BONDOC

Dutch man's death still under investigation

By Nancy C. Carvajal

AUTHORITIES ARE INVESTIGATING the death of a Dutch citizen man who is suspected to have killed himself inside his house in Caloocan City on Tuesday afternoon, a police investigator said yesterday.

"We want to make sure that no foul play was committed," SPO1 Jaime Basa said.

Police identified the victim as Ronald de Boer, 45, a businessman married to a Filipino, Marife, 34.

Basa said that despite a suicide note reportedly left by the victim for his son, an investigation was still necessary to rule out foul play.

He added that in the victim's letter, he bade his son goodbye and told him about his marital problems.

According to Basa, the letter had been submitted to the crime laboratory in Camp Crame for authentication.

The victim's wife and housemaid also submitted themselves to a paraffin test.

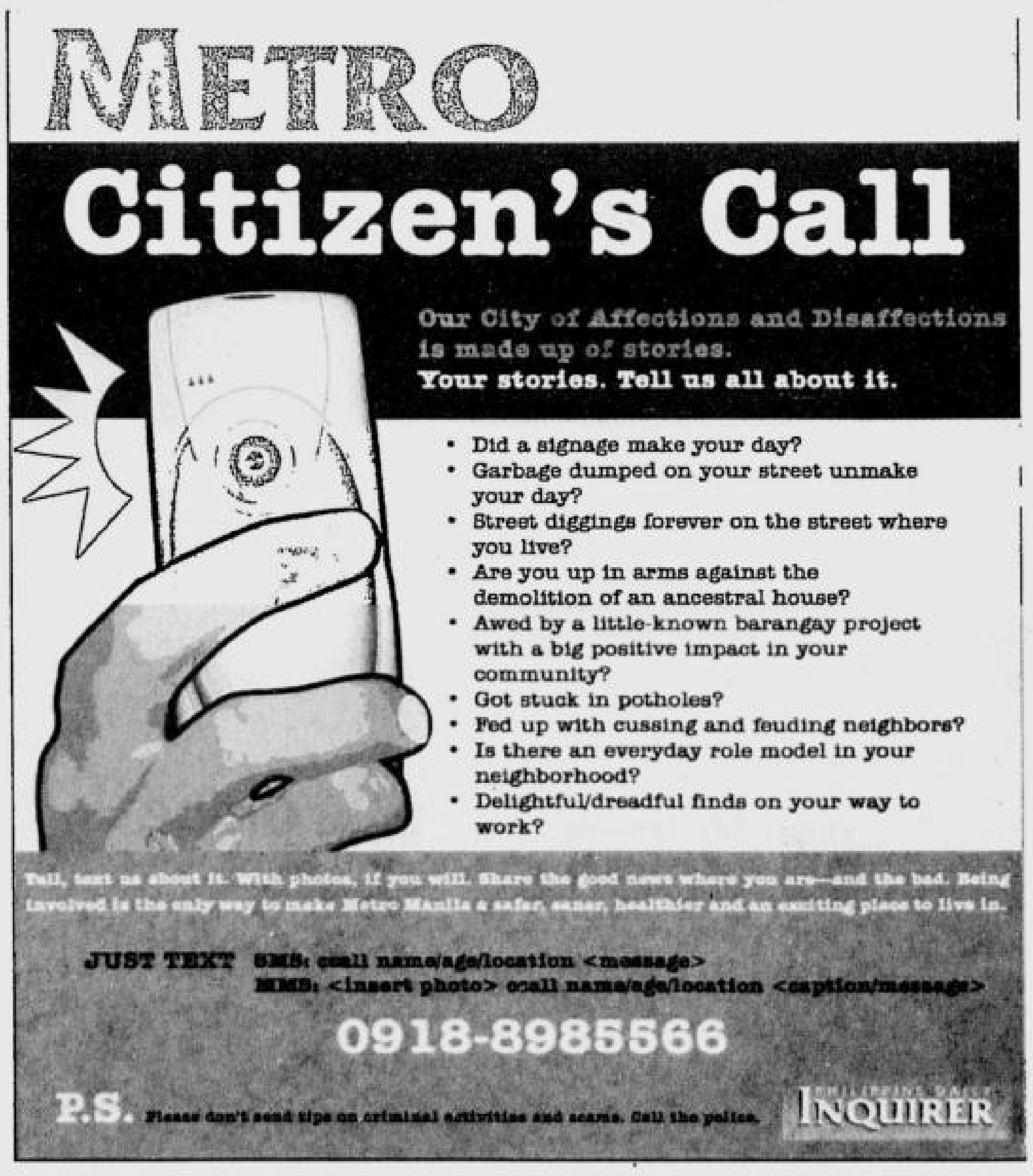
De Boer's body was found inside the master bedroom in the couple's three-story house on Capaz Street, 10th Avenue in Caloocan City.

According to the statement given to the police by the victim's wife, she found her husband lying on their bed, holding a .9 mm handgun.

The gun, the police said, was registered in the wife's name.

Based on the initial investigation, the victim shot himself in the mouth with the bullet exiting through the nape.

According to the victim's wife, they had agreed to separate and that it was an amicable parting of ways.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FIRST BIRTHDAY
Knut the polar bear yawns as he celebrates his first birthday at Berlin's Zoologischer Garten zoo on Dec. 5. The bear, born Dec. 5, 2006 at the zoo, caused a global sensation when he survived rejection by his mother and attracted more than two million visitors to the zoo. AFP

EU split on Russia vote

Sarkozy calls Putin, draws ire of allies

BRUSSELS—THE EUROPEAN UNION WAS in disarray on Tuesday over Russia's widely criticized parliamentary election after French President Nicolas Sarkozy telephoned President Vladimir Putin to congratulate him.

The French leader's gesture put him at odds with close ally Germany which flatly called the election "neither free, fair nor democratic" by Western standards, and most other EU governments voiced concern at reports of voting irregularities.

It also appeared to run counter to criticism by Sarkozy's own foreign ministry of the conduct of the poll.

The differing European responses to the vote, in which Putin's United Russia party won a landslide victory, highlighted the EU's problems in speaking with a single voice towards Russia, its major energy supplier.

"The president called Vladimir Putin to congratulate him," Sarkozy's spokesperson David Martinon told reporters on Monday evening during an official visit to Algeria.

Mild rebuke

After two days of wrangling over the wording, the EU's Portuguese presidency issued a mild rebuke over the conduct of the election.

"The EU regrets … that there were many reports and allegations of media restrictions as well as harassment of opposition parties and NGOs in the run-up to the elections and on election day, and that procedures during the electoral campaign did not meet international standards and commitments voluntarily assumed by Moscow," it said.

"The EU hopes that investigations will clarify the accuracy of these allegations." Diplomats said the presidency had had difficulty finding consensus in national capitals on a text.

"Some people want one thing, others want another," a Portuguese diplomat said in Lisbon.

The EU regretted the election monitoring office of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) had not been able to do long-term observation before the election, removing a reliable basis for assessing the vote. *AP*

Silence of the wind

LONDON—A BRITISH PENSIONER has been ordered out of his local social club for breaking wind too loudly, which "disgusted" fellow members, media reports said on Wednesday.

Maurice Fox, 77, received a letter from Kirkham Street Sports and Social Club in Paignton, south-west England, about his overly-audible flatulence, asking him to go outside when necessary.

"It's only a little bit of wind—it doesn't really hurt anyone. I sit by the door anyway and try to get out when I can. But sometimes it takes me by surprise and just pops out," he said, quoted by The Guardian daily.

"I think someone has complained about the noise. I am a loud farter, but there is no smell," he added.

Fox—who said he gets no complaints at another nearby club he attends two days a week—voiced surprise that he had received no oral warning before the written complaint.

But he admitted they had a point. *AFP*

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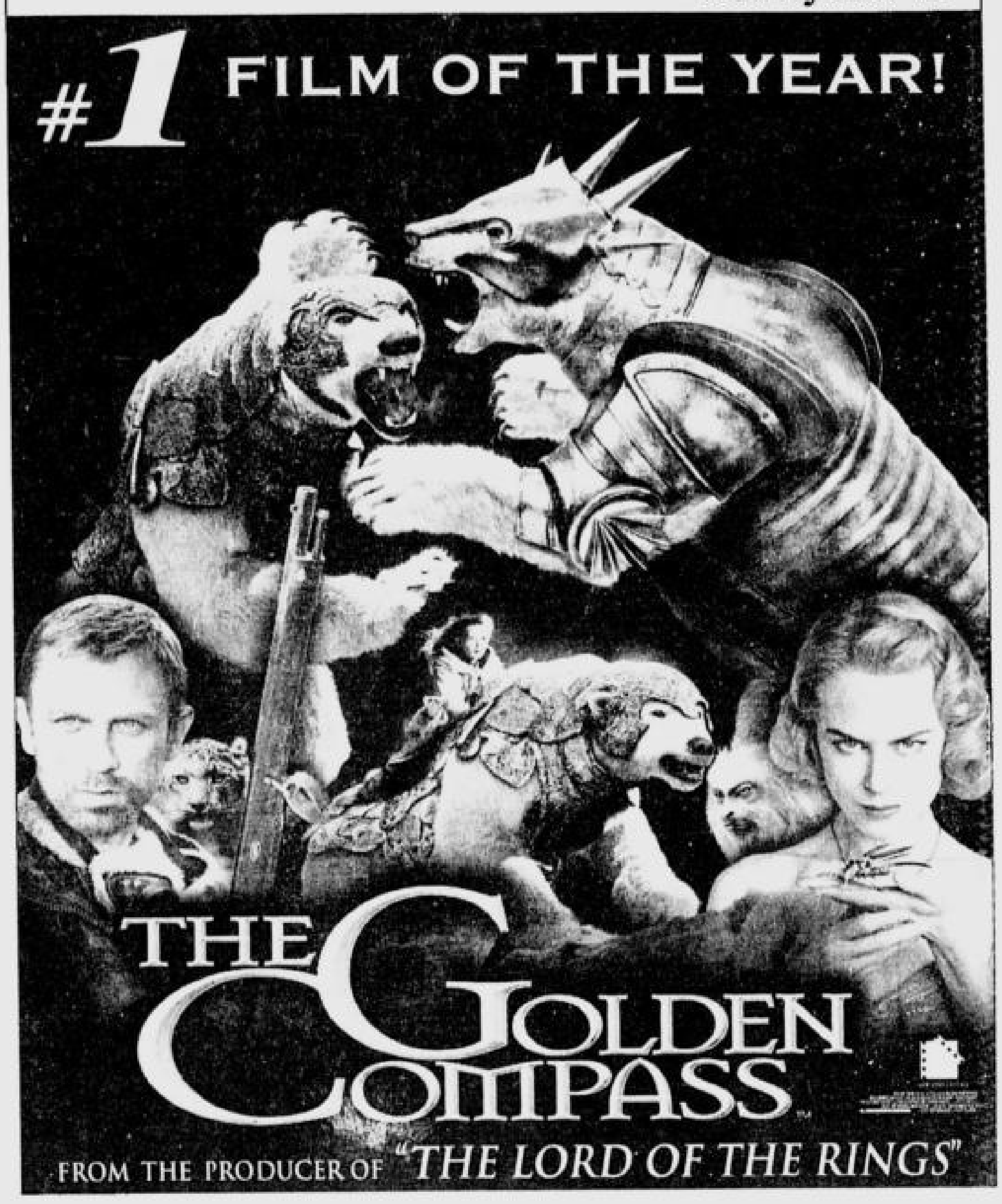
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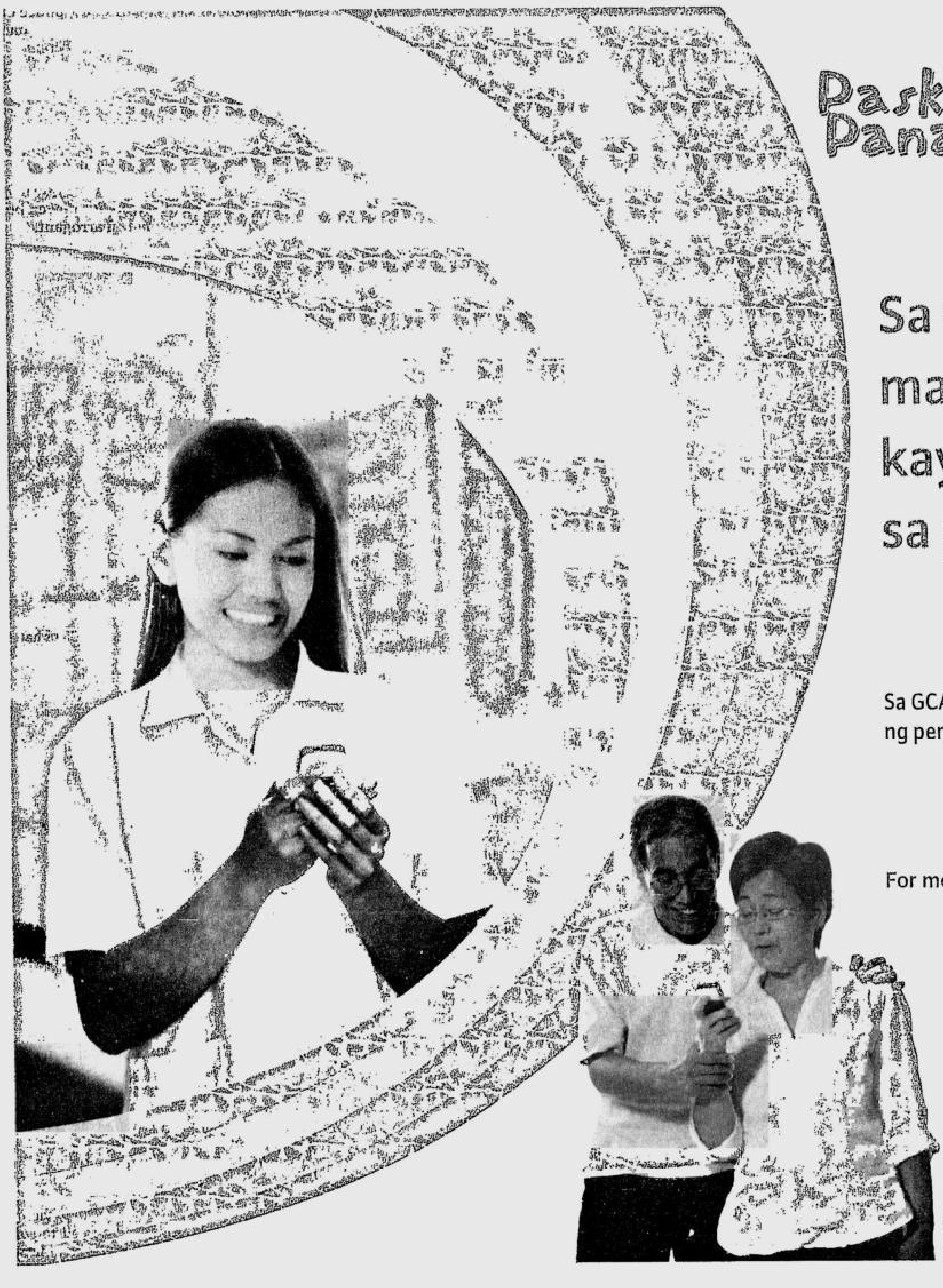

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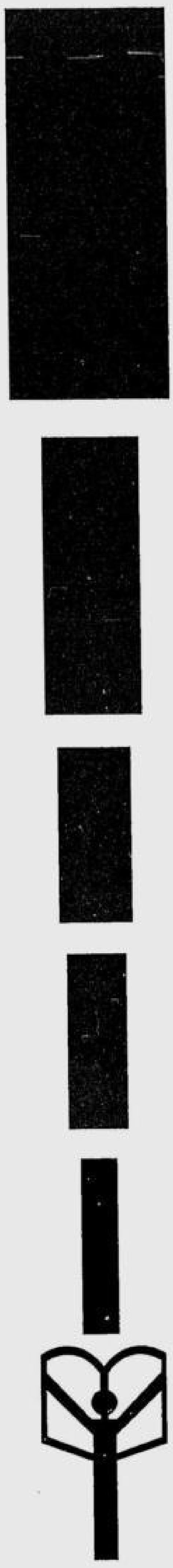

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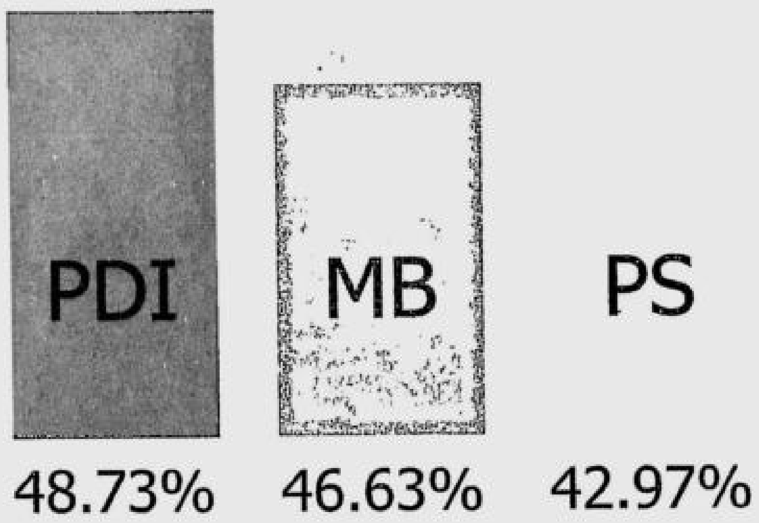

Nielsen Media Index Wave 1 2007 Figures. Among broadsheet readers yesterday.

White House

A HOMELESS man settles in for the evening at a subway stop near the White House on Monday in Washington, DC. The National Coalition for the Homeless estimates there are between 10,000 and 15,000 homeless people in the US capital. AFP

Iraq group threatens to kill a hostage

BAGHDAD—MILITANTS HOLDING five Britons in Iraq threatened in a video on Tuesday to kill one of them in 10 days as a "first warning" unless Britain withdrew its troops.

Violence in Iraq has fallen to its lowest level in nearly two years and US President George W. Bush said his "surge" strategy of sending 30,000 additional troops was working.

The US military said 40 senior al-Qaida figures had been killed or captured in November but the appearance of a British hostage in a video aired on Arabic-language al Arabiya channel underscored the continuing threat of violence.

The hostage was one of five Britons—a computer instructor and his four bodyguards—seized by gunmen from inside a Finance Ministry building in Baghdad in May.

The video, dated Nov. 18, set a deadline of 10 days from the date it was broadcast for Britain to pull its troops from Iraq. British troops are deployed in the mainly Shiite south.

"My name is Jason. Today is Nov. 18. I have been here now 173 days and I feel we've been forgotten," said one of the hostages on the video as he sat in front of a banner of the Shiite Islamic Resistance in Iraq. *Reuters*

China reports rise in juvenile crimes

Broken families, Internet blamed

BEIJING—UNDERAGE CRIMINALS in China have more than doubled in number in the last decade, and experts blame the rise on broken families, loosened social controls and the Internet's negative influence, an official newspaper reported on Wednesday.

Academics put the number of juvenile criminals at about 80,000, up from 33,000 in 1998, the official China Daily said, citing figures presented at a recent conference on the problem.

"Offenders' average ages have become younger and they are committing new types of crime and forming larger gangs," youth crime researcher Liu Guiming was quoted as saying.

It quoted Liu as blaming the problem primarily on "the influence of broken families, the depletion of school education, and incomplete social management"—an apparent reference to steady withdrawal of Communist Party influence in private lives amid the rise of the private sector.

About 59 percent of juvenile criminals came from broken homes, the paper said, noting figures collected by Shang Xiuyun, a Beijing judge specializing in juvenile crime.

Emotional neglect, broken marriages, and rising levels of violence in schools and in the home—all common worldwide causes of juvenile delinquency—are contributing to the problem, the report said.

However, China's problem also exhibits unique features, including neglect and meager education levels among an estimated 20 million children between the ages of 6 and 16 left behind in rural villages by the country's army of migrant workers.

Sociologists say such youths have to fend for themselves in education and farm work and are more likely drop out of school and drift into menial jobs and crime. *AP*

Loose restrictions over violent video games hit

WASHINGTON—THE VIDEOgame rating system restricting the sale of violent games to minors has not been applied correctly in the United States, where teenagers can easily buy them in stores, a family group said on Tuesday.

In its annual survey, the National Institute on Media and the Family reported that only 55 percent of retailers effectively banned the sale of mature, or "M" rated videogames to children under 17.

In 50 percent of the cases, a youth can purchase an M-rated videogame with nobody at the cash register taking notice, the institute said.

The 2007 survey showed that 12-year-old buyers who sought M-rated video games such as "Grand Theft Auto" or "Scarface" were able to purchase them half the time, and 15-year-olds, two-thirds of the time.

The study found that one of the reasons for the lax ratings enforcement was the age of the clerk, with older clerks being more compliant with store policies than younger clerks.

"In conclusion, this year's rating enforcement survey is discouraging," the institute said.

"Any parent who is paying attention cannot help but question the credibility of a ratings system employed by an industry that seems more eager to circumvent it," it added. *AFP*

Suicide bomber hits Army bus in Kabul

KABUL—A SUICIDE BOMBER slammed a bomb-filled car into an Afghan Army bus in the capital Kabul on Wednesday, killing at least 13 people, the defense ministry said, in the second such blast in two days.

The extremist Taliban group claimed responsibility for the morning rush-hour suicide attack, which struck in the south of the city as US Defense Secretary Robert Gates wrapped up a surprise visit.

The bus was reduced to mangled metal, its roof and sides blown out, an AFP reporter at the scene said.

"It was a big explosion and sent fire into the sky," witness Akbari Sarwar, told AFP.

"When I moved in I saw scores of bodies, legs, arms, heads, flesh everywhere," said Sarwar, a journalist who was on the road when the blast hit.

Six Afghan National Army soldiers and seven civilians were registered dead immediately after the attack, defense ministry spokesperson Gen. Mohammad Zahir Azimi told reporters at the blast site.

At least 13 people were wounded, he said, adding he expected the final numbers to be higher when the situation became more clear.

A health ministry official said four of the dead were children.

An official from the Kabul ambulance service said the organization was involved in evacuating a "very high number of casualties."

The attack occurred as Gates came to the end of his short trip to Afghanistan.

A suicide attack targeted at the Nato-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on the first full day of his visit on Tuesday missed the soldiers but wounded 22 civilians.

The extremist Taliban movement said it was responsible for the blast and for Wednesday's in which, spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahed claimed, scores of Afghan soldiers were killed.

The hardliners, in government between 1996 and 2001, have been behind a wave of around 140 suicide bombings in Afghanistan this year, the bloodiest in the extremist insurgency. *AFP*

Chavez defeat seen as wake-up call for Cuba

HAVANA—VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT Hugo Chavez's unprecedented defeat in a referendum is a wake-up call for Communist ally Cuba, which has come to rely heavily on the firebrand socialist leader, Cuba watchers say.

Chavez has kept the Cuban economy afloat with vital shipments of 92,000 barrels of oil per day, an estimated bill of $3 billion a year that cash-strapped Cuba pays for with medical and other services.

The man he calls his ideological father, ailing Cuban leader Fidel Castro, congratulated Chavez on his "dignified" concession speech in a note published in Cuba on Tuesday, two days after Venezuelans rejected Chavez's effort to run indefinitely for president.

But Castro, who has not appeared in public for 16 months, repeated his concerns about Chavez's future and safety, warning the Venezuelan leader that he is exposing himself to an assassin's bullet by riding too often in open vehicles.

Experts on Cuba said the referendum upset is further notice to Cuba's leaders that they must look for alternative sources of support because the Venezuelan lifeline is not eternal.

"The Cubans have always feared that one day—and rather suddenly—Chavez might disappear," said Frank Mora, a professor at the National War College in Washington. "They have done everything possible to find alternative sources of oil." Venezuela held out a hand to Cuba in the direst time of its post-Soviet crisis, and trade between the two allies has grown to $7 billion a year, Castro noted.

Cuban officials declined to comment on the significance for their country of a defeat that curbed Chavez's plans to speed up his socialist revolution in Venezuela. *Reuters*

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We find ways

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

DESPITE NEW REPORT

US not ruling out attack vs Iran

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES REFUSED to rule out a military attack on Iran and vowed to step up pressure on Tehran, despite a surprise US intelligence report saying Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003.

Iran said the US report had vindicated its stance, while UN atomic watchdog chief Mohamed ElBaradei said the document could help defuse tensions.

But US President George W. Bush was adamant that the Islamic state was a threat and called on US allies to step up pressure.

"Iran was dangerous, Iran is dangerous and Iran will be dangerous if they have the knowledge necessary to make a nuclear weapon," he told a White House press conference, a day after the new intelligence assessment.

"The best diplomacy, effective diplomacy, is one in which all options are on the table," he said.

"The best way to ensure that the world is peaceful in the future is for the international community to continue to work together to say to the Iranians we are going to isolate you."

The National Intelligence Estimate said US allegations about Iran's atomic goals had been exaggerated for at least two years, although it could have the capability to make a nuclear weapon by 2015. Iran responded positively to the report.

"Looks like there are wise people in the United States who seek to find a way out of the predicament which US leaders have created, and this report might help that," said Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, quoted by state news agency IRNA. "If America corrects its past approach we welcome that."

Iran's top nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili also responded optimistically. Asked if the report would improve the conditions for resolving the nuclear standoff, he replied: "Normally it should be this way."

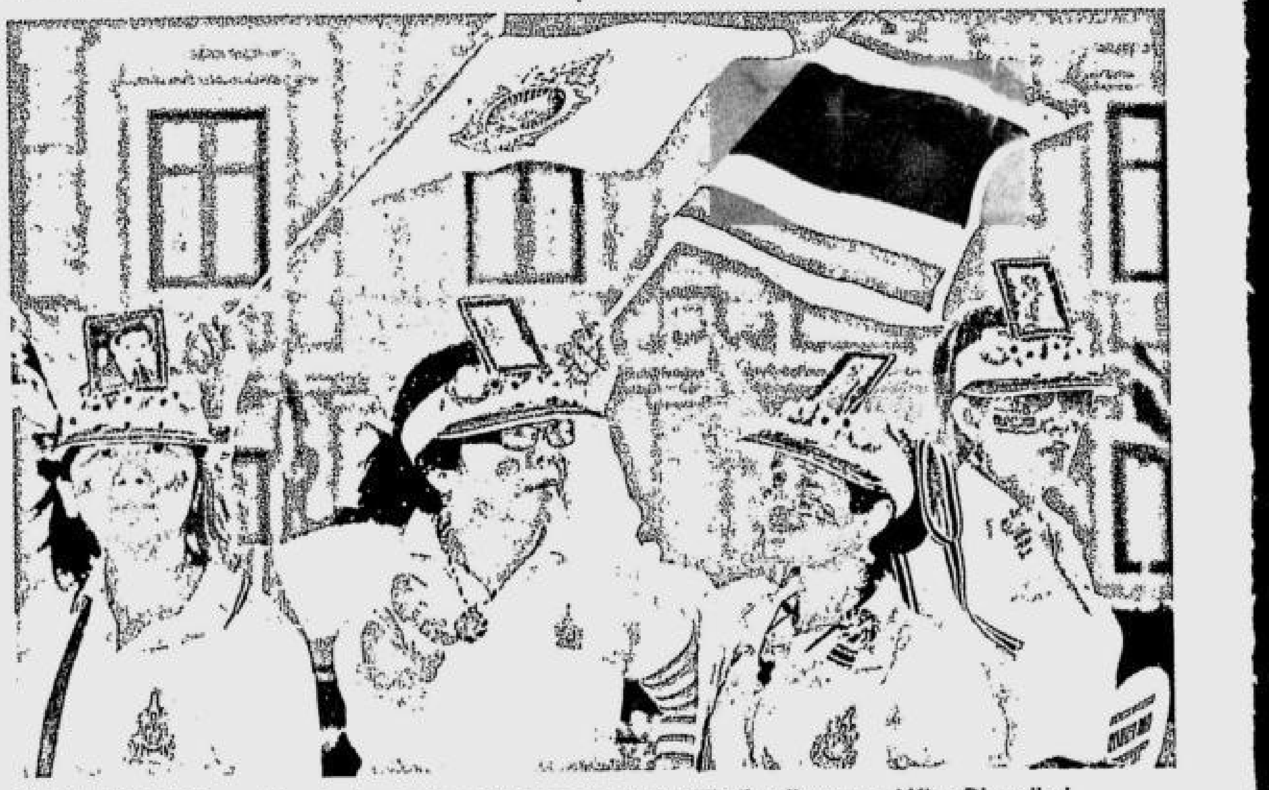
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) head ElBaradei, whose inspectors have been investigating Iran's nuclear drive for four years, called for immediate negotiations between Iran and its western critics.

But US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice vowed to press ahead for tougher UN sanctions against Iran, saying the US and the five other powers dealing with Iran must maintain their diplomatic pressure.

"There is time for diplomacy to work, but there isn't time to stop and say 'we don't need the diplomacy,'" Rice said.

A diplomat to the UN Security Council, asking to remain anonymous, confirmed the six powers were expecting to soon begin work on drafting a resolution for new sanctions against Tehran to go before the council.

But China's UN Ambassador Wang Guangya suggested the six powers' agreement to seek new sanctions could be called into question by the US intelligence assessment. *AFP*



WELL-WISHERS wave flags in Bangkok on Wednesday during Thailand's revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 80th birthday celebrations. AFP

Yellow revelry grips Thais over king's 80th birthday

BANGKOK—MORE THAN 100,000 people lined the streets around Bangkok's glittering Grand Palace on Wednesday to cheer Thailand's revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej as he celebrated his 80th birthday.

The crowds dressed in yellow shirts and waving flags emblazoned with a royal emblem lined the broad tree-lined avenues leading to the palace, as the king drove by in a pale yellow Rolls Royce.

Yellow is the color that Thais associate with Mondays, the day of the week when the king was born.

Millions of people across the country have worn yellow shirts every Monday since last year, when the king marked his 60th year on the throne as the world's longest-serving monarch.

Many people on the streets also wore pink to symbolize their wish for the king's good health, inspired by a pink blazer worn by the king as he was discharged from a hospital last month after nearly four weeks in bed to treat problems with the blood flow to his brain.

The king's motorcade drove him through a five-kilometer stretch of Bangkok's historic district to the Grand Palace, a sprawling compound of gilded castles and temples on the banks of the Chao Phraya River.

Police said more than 100,000 people lined the streets, while 20,000 of the nation's elite gathered inside the palace compound where the king sat on the balcony of his throne hall, dressed in full regalia, before members of his family, senior government officials and all of the military's top brass.

After a 21-gun salute, the nation's top government officials and the king's only son Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn delivered speeches praising the monarch's work to develop the country.

A BOY holds up high a portrait of King Bhumibol Adulyadej in Bangkok on Wednesday. AFP

In brief remarks to the crowd, the king read prepared remarks to thank his supporters and to call for national unity in the wake of last year's military coup, which toppled the elected government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

"I am delighted, and I appreciate that all of you have come to wish me happy birthday. I thank you all for your well-intended birthday wishes," he said.

"Our country will be peaceful and stable, with all key institutions working harmoniously and complementing each other, with full awareness of their duty to each individual person," he said.

"Then our country will become prosperous, stable and developed," he said, echoing remarks he made in a speech to the nation the night before. *AFP*

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Tourists mad at guides for too much shopping

HONG KONG—POLICE ARMED with riot shields and batons were called in to subdue angry tourists from mainland China who had clashed with tour guides in the tiny gambling enclave of Macau, police said on Wednesday.

The tourists were apparently unhappy that the guides had taken them to too many shops, when they wanted to see historical sites in the territory that Portugal returned to China in 1999, the South China Morning Post newspaper said.

Two or three officers were sent to resolve the dispute on Tuesday which involved more than 100 tourists, police spokesperson Pun Siu-tong said.

However, the tourists turned on the police, attacking and injuring one officer and then surrounding a police car to prevent the officers from leaving, he said.

More than 40 police armed with riot gear and batons were then dispatched to the scene, he said, denying earlier reports that the police were from Macau's riot squad.

Local TV footage showed police swinging truncheons to beat back crowds of tourists, some of them elderly.

"The situation was out of control, so police used appropriate force to stop them," Pun said.

Four police officers were slightly injured, he said, adding five tourists were charged with creating a public disturbance and confronting police.

Macau lawmaker Antonio Ng said the incident had damaged the territory's reputation.

"It's unfortunate that armed police were involved," Ng said.

Macau—a formerly sleepy backwater—has become a tourist hotspot in recent years as several big-name US gambling operators such as Las Vegas resort owners Sheldon Adelson and Steve Wynn develop the retail and casino industry. Macau is the only place in China where gambling is legal. *AP*

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More SEA Games stories on A30, A34

A WELL-BEATEN Filipino goalkeeper Nadia Galang (left) yields striker Do Thi Ngoc Cham's third goal in the Philippines-Vietnam women's football match at the Tumbon Meangpug Stadium in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand. At right is RP defender Josephine Luto. INQUIRER PHOTO/RAFFY LERMA

Fight for SEA Games crumbs under way

Peping sees Thai victory; RP athletes check in

By Ernesto A. Gonzales
Sports Features Editor

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—AT least, the overall winner of the two preceding Southeast Asian Games started to shape up only midway through the competition.

This time, however, everybody acknowledges a runaway victory for host Thailand—long before the opening of the 24th edition of the Games, which is set Thursday at the main stadium of the Nakhon Ratchasima Sports Competition Center here.

"There's no way they're going to lose. It's the birthday of their King," said Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., who led the first big batch of the 591-strong RP contingent that arrived here Tuesday.

"The fight is for second place."

It was an uninspiring but realistic assessment of the Filipinos' chances in this biennial sportsfest which they finally dominated for the first time two years ago on their third stint as hosts.

Like Vietnam, which prevailed in 2003 while setting a record of sort as the first home team to win on its first hosting stint, the Philippines didn't emerge as a serious title contender until after the first few days of competition.

This time, Thailand, the overall runner-up in the last two editions, has been conceded the championship. And it could yet serve as the highlight of the nation's year-long celebration to mark the 80th birth anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The King, who occupies a revered place in the history of the competition—he was a sailing champion of the Games when it was still known as the Southeast Asian Peninsular Games until 1977—celebrated his birthday Wednesday.

With action going full blast here and in Bangkok and Pattaya on Friday, the Thais are already in command with 18 golds, 19 silvers and seven bronzes in shooting.

Singapore was in second with 10 golds, followed by Vietnam with eight victories and Malaysia and Burma (Myanmar) with two each.

Meanwhile, a 139-man group headed by Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez, and including the 51-man athletics contingent and the women's basketball team, planed in Wednesday. The third and largest group of 155 will check in Thursday.

After winning 113 golds in 2005 on top of 84 silvers and 94 bronzes, the Philippines hopes to win at least 80 of the 485 events to be disputed in 42 sports to secure second place over Vietnam.

Admittedly not as prepared as in 2005, when the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, raised P160 million to fund their training, the Filipinos hope to somewhat make it a merry Yuletide season with victories in, among others, both divisions of basketball, which was not held two years ago because the country was under Fiba suspension.

The Filipinos also look forward to churning out outstanding efforts in the pool where Erica Totten, Jaclyn Pangilinan and Maria Georgina Gandionco will go for Olympic berths; in billiards where Asiad champion Antonio Gabica joins former world 9-ball king Ronnie Alcano and other traditionally rich medal sources like taekwondo, boxing, wushu, traditional boat race and athletics.

The Philippine women's football team took a 0-10 beating at the hands of Vietnam and put its fate in the hands of the defending champions *(See story on A30)*.

Joey Berba finished second in the seeding run of mountain cycling behind a Thai, while the two sepak takraw squads in the hoop event were in the middle of the pack after Wednesday's initial action.

The men's team of Danilo Alipan, Harrison Castanares, Joel Carbonilla, Hector Mencarion and Metodio Suico Jr. was fourth after two rounds, while the women's squad of Irene Apdon, Desere Autor, Sarah Jane Catain, Gelyn Evora and Rhea Padrigo also held fourth.

The Opening Ceremony will be held Thursday at 6 p.m. with Crown Prince Maja Vajiranlongkorn as guest of honor.

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

24th SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES

Medal tally	G	S	B
Thailand	18	19	7
Singapore	10	6	6
Vietnam	8	5	14
Malaysia	2	3	6
Myanmar	2	2	1
Philippines	0	3	1
Indonesia	0	0	5
Laos	0	0	0
Brunei	0	0	0
Cambodia	0	0	0
Timor Leste	0	0	0

Missing forms delay RP bets in Bangkok

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—SEVERAL Filipino athletes, part of a big 151-athlete wave to arrive here for the 24th Southeast Asian Games, were held for more than three hours at the Bangkok International Airport Wednesday because of a mixup with the local accreditation force.

Photos and application forms needed for the athletes' accreditation could not be found and the Reception and Protocol Committee of the Games scrambled to give them identification cards at the last minute.

That development delayed the Filipinos' arrival at the Olympic Village on the Suranaree University of Technology campus here. They checked into the village well into the night.

TENNIS ace Cecil Mamiit (front) and other RP athletes arrive at the Athletes Village. RAFFY LERMA

Members of the RP secretariat, led by Eleanor Navarro and Queenie Evangelista, facilitated the acquisition of new accreditation passes for the athletes, who touched down at the Bangkok airport together with Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez.

Ramirez, who was whisked away by the VIP welcoming committee, was the second top sports official to arrive after Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

Cojuangco planed in with more than 140 athletes and officials on Tuesday. They arrived in Korat about 10 p.m. (11 p.m. Manila time).

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Hapee stars make their mark individually

By Jasmine W. Payo

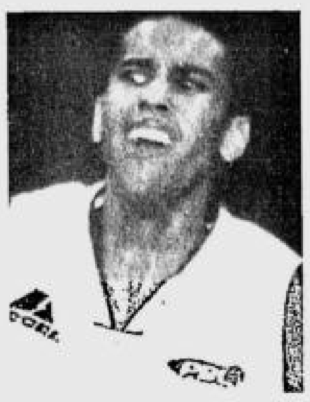
HAPEE'S DOMINANCE OF THE PBL V-Go Extreme Energy Drink Cup has crawled over to the individual race, with three core players of the unbeaten squad crowding the top of different statistical standings going into the quarterfinal round.

Fil-Am Gabe Norwood, after a slow start, has slowly evolved into the player he was hyped to be, while teammates Larry Rodriguez and Reed Juntilla have been revelations whose performances have helped Hapee ride a nine-game streak into the semifinals.

The trio put Hapee among the leaders in separate statistical department, with Juntilla ruling the scoring department, Rodriguez in blocks and Norwood in assists.

"It has always been a team effort," coach Jun Noel said of the Complete Protectors, who tied the 1998 Tanduay squad's nine-game winning record.

Juntilla, the veteran guard from Cebu, claimed the scoring honors at 15.8 points on top of 4.2 boards and 3.9 assists.


NORWOOD PDI PHOTO

Norwood, the 6-foot-5 guard suiting up for the national team in the Southeast Asian Games, led the league in assists at 6.3 per game along with averages of 12.3 points, 6.8 rebounds and a third-best 1.6 steals.

Rodriguez shared the most shotblocks with 6-foot-6 center Jason Ballesteros of Mail and More at 2.1 swats per game. The hard-working forward also ranked third in scoring at 13.9 and fifth in rebounds at 8.8.

Solomon Mercado, the Fil-Am guard of second-running Harbour Centre, led the tournament steals at 1.8 and averaged a team-best 13.4 markers, 3.6 rebounds and 4.2 assists; while San Mig Coffee's Al Magpayo grabbed the most rebounds at 10.6 and also normed 13.5 markers.

Meanwhile, the PBL quarterfinals will resume on Dec. 18 with San Mig Coffee and Toyota Balintawak toting twice-to-beat privileges as they square off against separate foes.

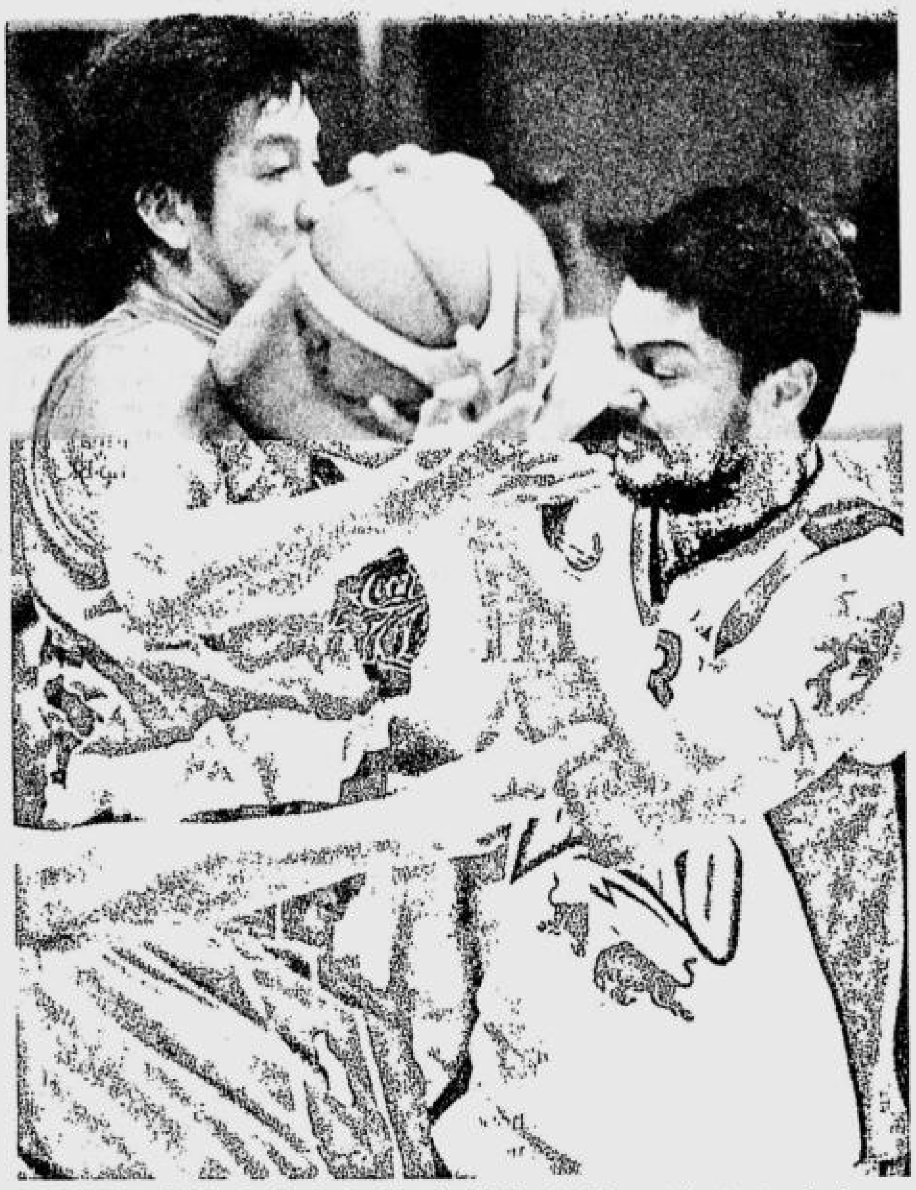
The Road Kings will battle the Mail and More Comets at 2 p.m., followed by the 4 p.m. feud between the Coffee Kings and the Pharex Medics at The Arena in San Juan.

The winners of the pair of quarterfinal matches will advance to the semifinals against Hapee and Harbour Centre.

Both squads earned automatic semifinal berths by topping the elimination round of the tournament.

Tigers halt Bulls streak

Yeo, Miranda shine as Realtors triumph over Aces


MARK Telan (left), who had a double-double for the Tigers, tries to stop Red Bull's Carlo Sharma drive to the hoop. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By June Navarro

ASI TAULAVA'S WINNING ATTITUDE is beginning to rub off on the Coca-Cola Tigers.

The Tigers stopped super-hot Red Bull on its tracks, 98-92, to chalk up a second straight win last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Rookie Ronjay Buenafe helped ice the win, scoring nine of his team's last 10 points. He completed a three-point play right under Mick Pennisi's nose and scored an insurance drive inside the final minute to boost the stock of the cellar-dwelling Tigers to three wins against eight losses.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Cuneta Astrodome)
4:50 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Air21
7:20 p.m.—Talk N Text vs Purefoods

In his third game as a Tiger, the 6-foot-9 Taulava again lit up the tally sheets and finished in double-double figures, along with former Talk 'N Text teammate Mark Telan.

Though he struggled in his matchup with the 6-foot-8 Pennisi, Taulava was still able to come up with 18 points and 18 rebounds to follow his 20-20 game against the Sta. Lucia Realtors last week.

Joseph Yeo and Dennis Miranda pulled off a couple of last-minute heroics to help the Realtors bounce back from that defeat as they tripped Alaska, 94-88, in the other game.

"Asi is amazing," said Coca-Cola coach Binky Favis.

"But what is really commendable about him are his energy and leadership," added Favis of his prized slotman, whom the Tigers acquired from the Phone Pals in exchange for Ali Peek.

Telan registered a double-double for the ninth time this conference via a 20-point, 16-rebound output while the 6-foot-1 Buenafe also finished with the same number of points for the Tigers, who snapped the Bulls' four-game win streak.

The Bulls, who absorbed a fourth loss after 11 games, tried to make the most out of their depleted lineup after Cyrus Baguio and Celino Cruz both contracted chicken pox.

Nelbert Omolon led the Realtors with 29 points but Yeo's offense at the crunch and Miranda's tough defensive stance on Willie Miller allowed the Realtors to pick up their fifth victory in 11 games.

The Aces, who halted a three-game roll, created a three-way tie with the Bulls and the Magnolia Beverage Masters at 7-4.

The scores

First Game

COCA-COLA 98—Telan 21, Buenafe 20, Taulava 18, Cabagnot 14, Tolomia 11, Duremdes 10, Dimaunahan 3, Isip 1, Enrile 0.

RED BULL 92—Najorda 20, Valenzuela 13, Pennisi 13, Duncil 12, Membrere 12, Bugia 5, Ybanez 5, Robinson 5, Sharma 4, Hrabak 3, Camaso 0.

Quarters: 24-27, 48-46, 70-68, 98-92

Second Game

STA. LUCIA REALTY 94—Omolon 29, Espino 15, Williams 11, Miranda 11, Gonzales 11, Yeo 8, Mendoza 4, Reyes 2, Aquino 2, Daa 1.

ALASKA 88—Miller 33, Cortez 16, Dela Cruz 10, Thoss 8, Hugnatan 8, Cabatu 4, Cariaso 4, Quinahan 3, Ferriols 2, Capus 0, Bono 0, Laure 0.

Quarters: 19-24, 46-43, 66-57, 94-88

Tañamor lone RP boxing medalist

LIGHT-FLYWEIGHT CONRADO Tañamor bowed to the foxy Zubiao Chen of China, 20-17, and settled for the bronze medal in the Asian Boxing Juniors championships in Almaty, Kazakhstan, Saturday.

Tañamor, a member of the RP-PLDT Smart boxing team, emerged as the country's lone medalist in the week-long slugfest.

The Amateur Boxing of the Philippines sent four boxers to the tournament. Froilan Saludar, Jose Vicera and Jaime Laguerta lost in the early rounds to their respective foes.

Kazakhstan emerged the overall champion by garnering seven gold medals. Uzbekistan brought home three gold medals from the meet while India scored one.

The RP team was also supported by Pacific Heights and the Philippine Sports Commission.

Female 'warriors' get ready to rumble

FILIPINOS WILL WITNESS ALL-FEMALE fights between leading mixed martial artists when the " Ring of Fire: World Team Challenge" gets going on Dec. 9 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ginele Marquez of Team Barnett goes up against Amanda Buckner of Team Gokor, while Kathrine Alendal of Team Gracie battles Tonya Evinger of Team Shamrock in a pair of free-for-all matches.

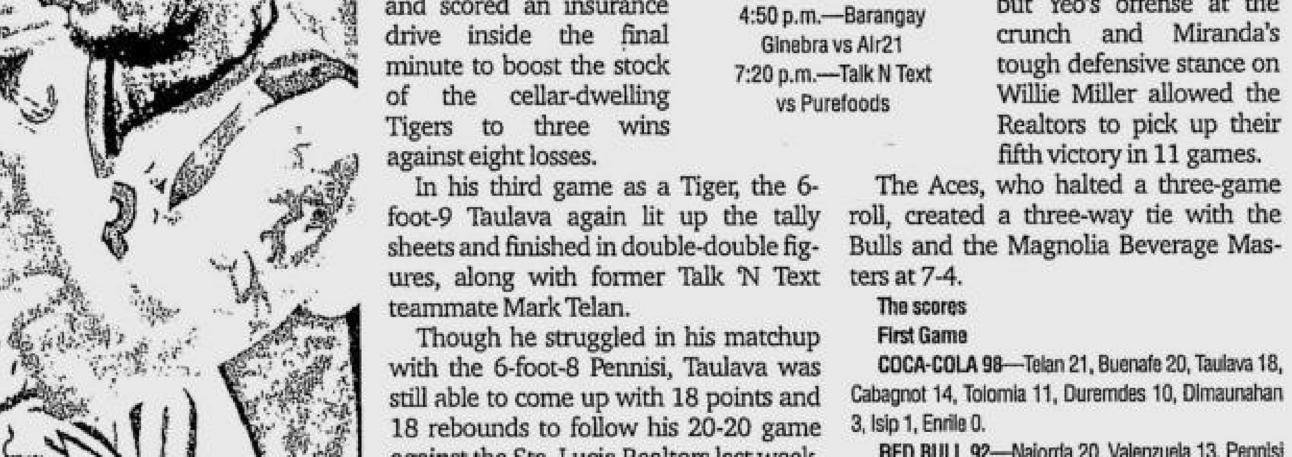
The 5-foot-3 Washington native Marquez brings a 5-6-1 win-loss-draw record in her rematch against Buckner, who beat her in 2003.

Action starts at 1 p.m. in the event organized by Platinum Fighting Productions and supported by the Department of Tourism and Crowne Hotel.

Mixed martial arts legends Ken Shamrock, Royce Gracie, Josh Barnett and Gokor Chivichyan will each field their teams of experienced fighters for the first of the five-part, four-nation series aimed at putting the sport of mixed martial arts on the Southeast Asian map.

"This will be the biggest MMA event in history. Dec. 9 will be a day to remember for countless MMA fans in the country," said Ron de la Torre, CEO of Platinum Fighting Productions, organizer of the event.

De la Torre is even confident the "Ring of Fire: World Team Challenge" at the Big Dome can do to mixed martial arts what the original "Thrilla in Manila" fight between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier did to local boxing in terms of popularity in 1975.



TEBOY Javier(2nd from left) team captain of Ateneo shakes hands with La Salle skipper Jay Gervasio (3rd from right) while organizers of the Ateneo-La Salle Matchplay 2007 look on. RYAN LIM

'Ateneo-La Salle tilt good for golf'

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR Carlos "Bobong" Velez to realize that he had a hit in his hand.

The Ateneo-La Salle Match Play 2007 kicks off on Dec. 19 at the Tagaytay Highlands pitting the best golfing products of both schools in an event that has gone through a new twist.

"This could be the start of a more mass-based appeal for golf," said Velez, who was tasked by tournament organizers to market the event under his Reverie Communications Connections.

"There's a lot of potential for golf to really boom because of this tournament, which will be riding on a natural rivalry between both schools," said Velez, who envisions the Ryder Cup-style event to fill galleries with fans in blue and green and create a mass appeal for a sport deemed as to elitist for the general public.

Last year, Tommy Manotoc, a many-time national player and a vaunted force on the seniors scene, headlined a La Salle cast that also includes Miko Alejandro, William Hong, JP Reyes, King Stehmeier and Louie Garcia. Ateneo, on the other hand, brought in the likes of Anthony Fernando, Marcel Puyat, Katrina Gonzales, Lovely Guioguio, Iggy Clavecilla, Jose Mari Hechanova and Jeric Hechanova.

"Hopefully, with the history of rivalry, this will be a major event in the country's annual sporting calendar and in turn, hopefully, this event will give golf a wider audience," said Velez.

Belle Corporation and Tagaytay Highlands have joined hands to organize the tournament. The Highlands' Willy Ocier, aptly a product of both schools, announced that the golf course will host the event until 2009.

Jay Gervacio of La Salle and Teboy Javier of Ateneo will serve as team captains.

Format calls for 18 players comprising each team, including two senior (55-above) and two women players. Final lineups will be announced on Dec. 18. *Francis T. J. Ochoa*

PBA's new commissioner known Dec. 17

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

UNLESS THE process hits some unforeseen snags, the Philippine Basketball Association should have a new commissioner before Christmas of this year.

To be exact, the league should have a commissioner by Dec. 17, the same date the PBA board convenes for the last time this year.

On Dec. 17, a Monday, the board will listen to the four remaining candidates present their plans and programs for the league. They will each be given a maximum of 30 minutes to do this.

The presentation will start at 10 a.m. and end at noon, after which there will be a question and answer portion.

***

Lunch break follows, with the session resuming soon after, minus the candidates. The board evaluates the presentations, deliberates and then votes for the man they deem to be best for the job of PBA commissioner.

A candidate who gets the required six votes automatically becomes commissioner. However, if none of the four candidates get six votes, the two with the lowest votes are dropped.

The governors then cast their ballots again for either of the remaining two candidates who got the highest votes.

Yesterday, acting commissioner Sonny Barrios distributed the personal résumés of the four candidates to all the PBA governors.

The four candidates are, in alphabetical order: Patrick Gregorio, Lambert Ramos, Chot Reyes and Chito Salud.

***

According to Sonny, all four are qualified for the position and capable.

"From what I know and from what I've read, each has his own asset and talent.

Chot, for example, has a very profound knowledge of the game of basketball. As far as league operations are concerned, he has adequate experience from [handling] the Metropolitan Basketball Association."

"Lambert Ramos, on the other hand, is highly experienced in the corporate world., If any of the governors were looking for a top corporate guy, this Nextel president should be his man," said Sonny of the ex-seminarian.

While Patrick Gregorio's forte may be tourism, Sonny said he comes from a basketball family (Ryan is head coach of Purefoods, while Allan is assistant coach of Air 21) and therefore 'knows enough of basketball.' Patrick is also the executive director of the SBP."

Like Patrick, Sonny said Chito Salud also "knows enough" of basketball, being the son of former PBA commissioner Rudy Salud. A lawyer, Chito has been the president of two government corporations.

***

According to Sonny, the board meeting was originally scheduled for Dec. 13. However, on the request of Gregorio, who will be in Thailand for the Southeast Asian Games, the meeting was moved to the 17th.

The basketball competition in the SEAG will be a one-round robin affair, the team with the most number of wins being declared the champion.

***

Was it her husband's nephew I was referring to in my column? The lady I met in Laoag two years ago during the PBA All-/Star Weekend wanted to know.

I was surprised to get a call from her, and had completely forgotten that she had the same married surname as one of the coaches in the PBA. I remembered her maiden name, though, because it was a most prominent name in Ilocos.

The lady from Laoag said it had been difficult for her nephew to win in the ongoing conference, because there were so many injuries in the team.

But now that the players are starting to recover, she said the fans expect a better showing.

***

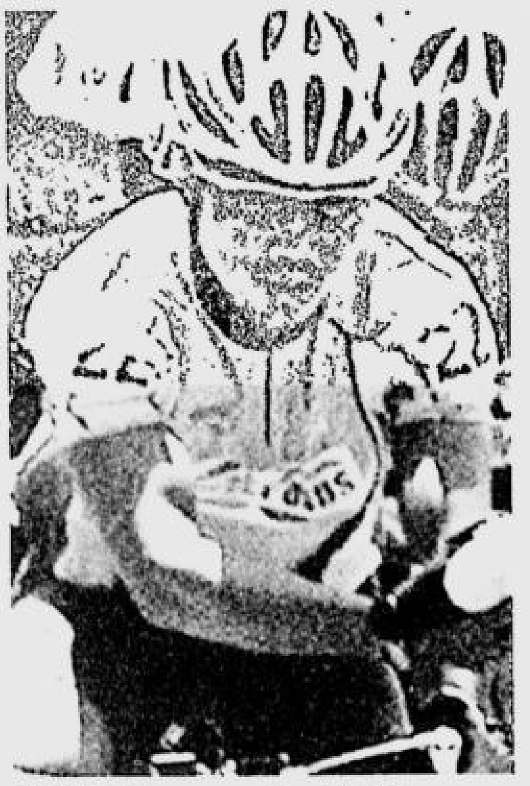
Nursing students from over 300 schools and colleges nationwide will get a chance to display their athletic skills and prowess as they compete in the First Philippine Intercollegiate Nursing Olympiad, which will be held at the UP Bahay ng Alumni on Jan. 11, 2008.

Organized by the Bright Center for Career and Educational Support, at stake are cash prizes worth P150,000 and review scholarship packages. For details, call 7426151 or 7426101.

DOWNHILL BIKE

Barba hot on Thai's heels in qualifying

By Musong R. Castillo


CYCLING Tour veteran Eusebio Quinones opens RP bid in cross country. ROMY HOMILLADA

FREDERICK Feliciano vies in an event where he first made a name for himself. ROMY HOMILLADA

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

KHAO YAI THIENG, THAILAND—Filipino Joey Barba finished second in the seeding run of the downhill event of mountain cycling in the 24th Southeast Asian Games Wednesday, just over a second slower than Thai ace Sitichai Ketkaewmanee.

Barba already earned a small victory by conquering the course that was made to favor the home bets. He will be flagged off second to last in the medal round Thursday.

Barba, 23, timed 4-minutes and 3.664 seconds for the 1.9-kilometer course here, which is about 60 kilometers away from the main venue in Nakhon Ratchasima province.

"The real battle will be tomorrow (Thursday)," coach Jomel Lorenzo told the INQUIRER in Filipino. "Considering that he (Barba) finished second in qualifying and close behind in time, we have a strong shot (at the gold medal).

"It's still anybody's game. The Thai (Ketkaewmanee) has the advantage because they built this course. But luck also plays a major role in cycling."

Indonesian Sejati Popo Ariyo was third, 6.596 seconds behind, while home bet Wisit Phuengnoi checked in fourth in the eight-man starting field, 9.495 seconds behind the qualifying topnotcher.

The men's cross country event will be flagged off on Friday with Nino Surban and Tour Pilipinas veterans Eusebio Quinones and Frederick Feliciano carrying the fight for Team Philippines. Feliciano first rose to Asian prominence in mountain biking.

Maritess Bitbit, meanwhile, is the only Philippine entry in women's cross country race. The men's side will start at 9 a.m. (10 a.m. Manila time) with the women's side to commence at 1 p.m.

Viet rout turns RP booters into 'cheerleaders'

By Musong R. Castillo

TUMBON MUEANGPUG, THAILand—The Philippines will now have to cheer the enemy.

The Vietnamese mangled the Filipino booters black and blue for a full 90 minutes Wednesday afternoon, coasting to a 10-0 victory in the football competition of the 24th Southeast Asian Games at the Tumbon Meangpug Stadium here.

That loss effectively reduced the young Filipinos to mere spectators—if not cheerleaders for the Vietnamese—for their chances of advancing to the Final Four now rest on a bigger victory by the defending champions over Laos.

The Filipinos were put in this predicament after they were held to a frustrating 2-2 draw by the Laotians on Monday.

The Laos-Vietnam match is scheduled for Friday.

The Filipinos will advance to the semifinals only if the Vietnamese beat the Laotians by a margin of 11 goals or better. Laos gets into the Final Four if it scores at least once and loses by no more than 10 goals.

Strikers Do Thi Ngoc Cham and Doan Thi Kim Chi scored hat-tricks in leading the Vietnamese to the overpowering win, one that's even better than a 9-0 whipping they dealt the Filipinos in the AFC tournament in Myanmar.

Four foreign players with Filipino roots have since been added to the RP roster, but even their presence couldn't keep the game close as the Vietnamese raced to a 6-0 lead in the first half to take the fight out of the Filipinos.

"We're down, yes, but we're still hoping and praying," said eloquent skipper Marielle Benitez. "They (Vietnamese) are very quick and that's their main strength."

The team will take Thursday off but will return to training Friday in hopes of advancing to the semifinals.

"That is a definite possibility," Benitez said. "Laos is just basically a two-player team."

Bui Thi Tuyet Mai and Tran Thi Kim Hong were the other Vietnamese starters who contributed goals, with Thi Minh Nguyet Nguyen coming off the bench to knock in the final two.

The Filipinos managed only two shots on goal against the Vietnamese who made 22 attempts, all but four of them clear shots.

Tournament format calls for the top two placers in each group to advance to the crossover semifinals. Thailand and Myanmar (Burma) both tote 1-0 cards in Group B.

Olympic berths stir well-honed RP swimmers

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—WE'LL do better this time.

With three stalwarts already clinching Olympic berths and three more expected to join them by qualifying here, the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association expects to easily surpass its previous four-gold effort at the 24th Southeast Asian Games which begins in earnest here tomorrow.

Pasa president Mark Joseph said the swimmers could win as many as six golds with female tankers Erica Totten, Maria Georgina Gandionco and Jaclyn Pangilinan now looming as strong golden bets as they pursue slots in next year's Beijing Olympics.

"I think these girls will hurdle the Olympic qualifying standards in their respective events, and to achieve that, they have to win," said Joseph, a former crack swimmer himself who is also the deputy secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Miguel Molina, who won three of the four golds two years ago at the Trace Aquatic Center in Los Baños, Laguna, remains the cornerstone of RP's aquatics drive, but he will get able support this time from James Walsh and Ryan Arabejo.

The three became the first three Filipinos to secure Olympic slots with Molina surpassing the standard in the 200-meter individual medley, Walsh in the 200m butterfly and Arabejo in the 1,500m freestyle.

Also seeing action for the national team that also picked up five silver and and six bronze medals in 2005 are Daniel Coakley, Nikita Dacera, Lorenzo Dee, Ronald Guiriba, Kendrick Uy, Denjylie Cordero, Anna Celina Gonzalez and Nicole Santiago.

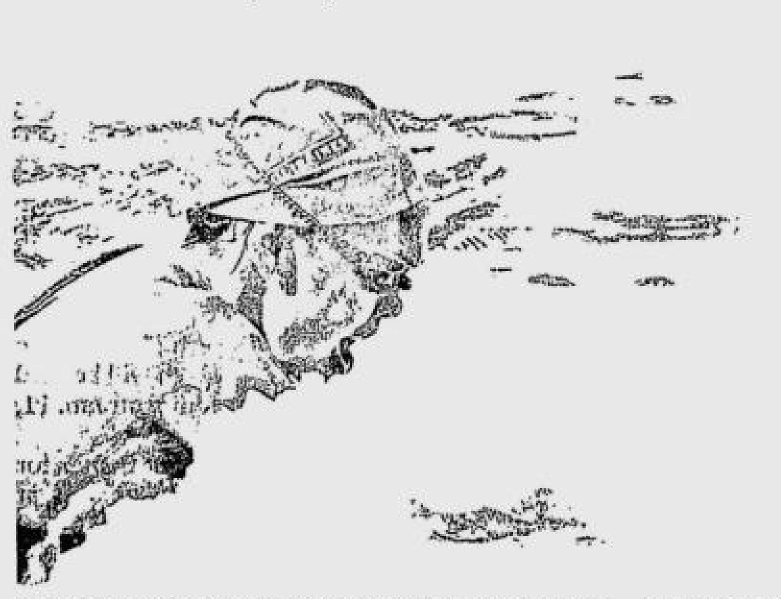
The country actually finished with a 9-7-8 gold-silver-bronze performance two years ago with the divers responding with five victories, three by Sheila Mae Perez, and water polo again contributing a silver medal.

The diving team is virtually intact but Joseph said Sheila and Co. face the prospect of performing before judges expected to be biased to please the host country.

"You never know, but winning is expected to be harder this time," he said.

As for water polo, Joseph said only the lack of exposure prevents the country from ending Singapore's long domination of the sport.

"We have the talent, the Singaporeans fear us, but we cannot win. Why? Well, our water polo team saw action in Australia and fared well, but that's just one meet, while the Singaporeans have competed in 12 international meets so far."


ERICA Totten heads the RP medal bidders in the pool. EDWIN BACASMAS

Frankie, 48, sets sights on US Seniors

FRANKIE Miñoza says he no longer puts pressure on himself to win. ROMY HOMILLADA

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

BANGKOK—INSPIRED BY his strongest season in years, Frankie Miñoza now hopes to take a crack at the seniors circuit of the US Professional Golf Association when he joins the 50 years-and-above set in two years' time.

"I plan to go through the qualifying in the US '*pag puede na* (when I become eligible)," said the country's top pro golfer, who will turn 48 this month, at the Centennial Airport Tuesday while on his way to the Volvo Masters of Asia tournament in Bangkok.

The Volvo Masters, which starts Thursday, caps the Asian Tour schedule and features only the top 40 in the UBS Order of Merit and the leg winners of this year's circuit.

Miñoza secured his place in the season-ending event by ruling the Philippine Open last February. The Filipino ace went on to achieve a rare victory double on the Asian golf scene by also topping the ABC championship in the rich Japan Tour almost a month ago.

No Filipino has made it to the PGA Seniors with Mario Siodina and Simplicio Taguiam failing in their respective bids a long way back.

Miñoza is actually competing in his eighth straight tournament at the Volvo Masters, playing with some of the world's best in big tournaments in Singapore, China and Hong Kong while taking time out from the Japan circuit in that span.

Tiring, but an opportunity

"*Nakakapagod din, pero kailangang samantalahin ang pagkakataon* (It's tiring but I don't want to miss the opportunity), said Miñoza, a two-time Asian Order of Merit topnotcher who has remained fit and trim through a conditioning program of jogging and lifting weights.

But the soft-spoken fairway star from Del Monte, Bukidnon, attributes a new mind-set in resuscitating his career.

"I no longer put pressure on myself to win," said Miñoza, who also finished in the top 10 with his sixth win on the Asian Tour in the recent ABC tourney.

"I take things as they come, shot by shot, day by day. If I win, good. If not, that's part of the game."

Sponsored by Philippine Airlines, which takes care of his travel in the region, Miñoza is also backed by American Eye Center, which he credits for improving his vision.

"Now I read my putts accurately," he laughed.

It is probably also the reason why he sees a bright future in the seniors' ranks.

Blu Boys, Blu Girls eye softball sweep

THE PHILIPPINE BLU BOYS AND BLU Girls, the defending softball champions, are brimming with confidence and raring to do battle in the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

Head coach Isaac Bacarisas said the Blu Boys' series of matches against Japan's national team last month convinced him that his charges are up to the challenge at the Games.

Although the Filipinos lost all their four encounters against the Japanese, Bacarisas said they could have won at least twice if they only had an extra closer.

"We were just one closing pitcher short," said Bacarisas, adding the recent teambuilding the Cebuana Lhuillier-sponsored squad underwent last week helped improved morale.

He said the Indonesians, silver medalists in the 2005 Manila Games, remained the Blu Boys' strongest rivals.

"We know that the (Indonesian) team was sent to Australia for training for almost a month," said Bacarisas.

Blu Girls coach Ana Santiago said the team has made big gains in teamwork and offensive sock after finishing fourth at the last Asian Women's Softball Championship in Indonesia.

"We have improved a lot and the team is more cohesive now," Santiago said. "We played practice matches against men's teams, even managing to score against them."

She considers Singapore as the Blu Girls' toughest opponent.

"When we saw them at the Asian championship, I was impressed by their speed," Santiago said of the Singaporeans. "The Indonesians played against our collegiate teams, so we were able to scout them. The Thais, I heard, also went to Japan to train."

Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines president Jean Henri Lhuillier, who tendered a send-off lunch for the teams in Makati Wednesday, expressed confidence in his teams' chances to sweep the softball gold medals.

"I believe the preparation they have made, with both teams able to get overseas stints prior to the Games, is enough for them to deliver," said Lhuillier. "We are the best in the region and we intend to maintain that."

Ni gets back at Sadorra, grabs lead

NI: Doubly satisfying victory

By Roy Luarca

Standings after six rounds:

5.5 points—Ni H. (China); 4.5—R. Antonio (RP), M. Paragua (RP), W. So (RP), J. Sadorra (RP), Z. Zhong (Singapore), Hai D.T. (Vietnam), Chao L. (China); 4—E. Torre (RP), D. Laylo (RP), J. Gonzales (RP), R. Bitoon (RP), J. Gomez (RP), H. Nouri (RP), O. Barbosa (RP), D. Elorta (RP), E. Maghami (Iran), Dung N.A. (Vietnam), Huang Q. (China), Zhou W. (China), Lie Y. (China)

FOR CHINESE GRANDMASTER NI Hua, beating Filipino International Master Julio Catalino Sadorra Tuesday night was doubly satisfying.

Ni not only exacted revenge, he also grabbed the solo lead after six rounds of the 2007 Prospero Pichay Jr. Cup International chess championship at the Duty Free Fiesta Mall in Paranaque City.

The top-seeded Ni, who got stunned by Sadorra and settled for second place in the recent second GMA Cup, exploited the white pieces to climb to 5.5 points and boost his bid for the $5,000 (about P215,000) champion's purse of the nine-round Swiss system tournament.

The Singapore-based Sadorra, one of the country's brightest chess hopes, remained at 4.5 points in the company of countrymen GM Rogelio Antonio Jr., GM Mark Paragua and IM Wesley So, Singaporean GM Zhang Zhong, Vietnamese GM Dao Thien Hai and Chinese GM Li Chao.

Antonio, currently the country's top-ranked player with an Elo of 2540, rebounded into contention by humbling compatriot IM Ronald Dableo.

The 23-year-old Paragua and the 14-year-old So, who's bidding for his third and final GM result, agreed to split the point in their pivotal match.

Dao, Vietnam's first grandmaster, and Li, who vaulted into prominence by topping the GMA Cup at the expense of Ni via the tiebreak, also greed to a draw.

Boasting a lofty Elo of 2641, Ni is battling Zhang (Elo 2634), a former member of China's national team who's now donning the Singapore colors, in the seventh round being held at presstime.

Zhang, ranked 93rd in the world, primed up for his top board encounter against Ni, ranked 78th, by downing Xiaowen Zhang of China.

Asia's first GM Eugene Torre trounced buddy NM Rolando Nolte to lead a big bunch of 4.0-pointers.

In the same group are Filipino GM Darwin Laylo, who drew with Chinese WIM Huang Qian; IM Jayson Gonzales, who beat Indonesian IM Halay Taufik; IM Richard Bitoon who halved the point with Iranian GM Ehsan Ghame Maghami and John Paul Gomez, who trounced IM Chito Garma.

Hamed Nouri, top Filipino finisher in the 2006 GMA Cup, downed Indonesian Farid Firmansyah and also improved to 4.0 points with unheralded David Elorta, who thwarted Singaporean WGM Li Ruofan.

Sanctioned by the International Chess Federation (Fide), the $30,000 event is being staged by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines under Pichay and Tagyatay City Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino.

FIL-AM GOLF

Club Marinduque takes lead

By Jong Arcano

BAGUIO—LOOKS LIKE A DOUBLE championship won't be as easy as last year for Club Marinduque's Calatagan boys.

Club Marinduque, behind Jerson Balasabas, seized control by 13 points in the Am Championship division but saw its Fil squad held to a tie by Manila Southwoods at the start of the hostilities in the centerpiece events of the 58th Fil-Am wars here.

Marinduque's Fil Championship mainstays took the clubhouse lead on the strength of Johnnel Ababa's 36 and pro-bound Jay Bayron's 33, but Gene Bondoc (35), Tonyt Fernando (33) and Mike Bibat (32) pulled Southwoods even in their duel at the Baguio Country Club.

The rival squads ended the day tied at 130 with Mark Fernando adding a 31 and Rufino Bayron a 30 to the Marinduque cause.

Young Tonton Asistio made it as the fourth scorer for Southwoods with a 30 at a course which gnarled its teeth with its hard, elevated greens.

The stars of the Fil-Am show return to BCC again today for a crucial round with both teams eyeing some cushion. Fernando, Ababa and Fernando are set to motor back to Manila after their games to join the RP team's flight to Bangkok for the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

Marinduque's Am assault team got the initial job done and it was Balasabas who shone brightest. He eagled the par-5 first hole and made four birdies that negated two pick-up holes for a 37 at Camp John Hay.

Zannie Boy Guialon and Joseph Labajo posted 34 while either of the 30s of Dave Hernandez and Ryan Lam counted as Marinduque's last score in the five-to-play, four-to-count format.

Marinduque finished with a 135 for the day in an early breakaway as Southwoods could only tally 122 on the 32 of Miko Alejandro and the identical 30s of Montito Garcia, Junjun Plana and Erwin Vinluan.

"We expected it to be very close and we'll not be surprised if it goes down to the final hole in the final round," said Marinduque owner Felix Cortez, subbing as captain for the team pending the arrival of Tommy Manotoc from Manila.

Last year, Marinduque, then known as Nike-Calatagan, opened up a big lead in the first round and cruised to victory in both the Fil and Am divisions.

Leading their respective divisions were Mizuno Beeline (Fil-A), Mamala Bay (Fil-B), Guam Kool Swingers (Fil-C), Davao Eagle Masters (Fil-D), Guam Kool Swingers (Am-B), Mamala Bay (Am-C) and Greenwater@NE Bibak (Am-D).

Tournament sponsors are Mazda Phils, Club Car, Wilson, Royal Carribean, Eva Airways, El Nido Resorts and My Phone.

Updated and complete results are available at pilipinasgolf.com, the joint website of INQUIRER Golf and Golf Digest Philippines.

BALASABAS: Brightest BONG MERCADO

Orduna leads nat'l kart winners

WINNERS ALL: (from left) Juha Turalba, Joey Orduna and Roby Benito

JOEY ORDUNA, ROBY BENITO AND Juha Turalba led R2R-Tuason Racing's impressive showing in the recently concluded 2007 season of the National Karting Super Series.

Orduna swept all three races of the championship leg at the Carmona Circuit to capture the overall Mini-ROK crown. He ruled six of the eight legs this season and wrapped up his campaign with a total of 543 points, a 119-point margin over runner-up Tonyo Carcel of Cebu Racing Group.

Benito was first runner-up in the Cebu leg of both ROK Junior and Formula 125 Open Juniors classes while Turalba bagged second runner-up honors in the same divisions.

Orduna and Turalba also made waves recently in the international scene.

Orduna pulled off another sweep in the Indonesian round of the Asian Karting Open Championship and will be gunning for the Asian Mini-ROK crown in the championship round in Macau on Dec. 13-16.

At the ROK World Cup at the South Garda Karting Circuit in Lonato, Italy, Orduna finished 16th in the 28-man field.

On the other hand, Turalba placed third in both the Macau and Indonesian legs of the Asian Karting Open Championship.

Desamito, Sabal lead Yakult runners

DEFENDING CHAMPION BERNARDO DEsamito and two-time Milo Marathon winner Cresenciano Sabal lead the initial list of participants in the 19th Yakult 10- Miler set Sunday at the CCP Complex in Pasay City.

Desamito outsprinted Sabal last year to rule the 18th staging but Sabal got even by beating Desamito during the national finals of the Milo Marathon last month.

Members of the national team won't be seeing action as they are set to compete in the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand which formally opens today.

Runners from Baguio City will also join the race including Sandy Abahan, Che Alberto and delegates from the Philippine Military Academy led by cadet Elizabeth Rosette.

Crowding Desamito and Sabal for the men's crown are Joel Bengtay, Abraham Barcarse Jr and Cresenciano's brother Elmer and Gerald.

In the distaff side, former Milo Marathon queen Liza Yambao will challenge defending women's champion Maricel Maquilan.

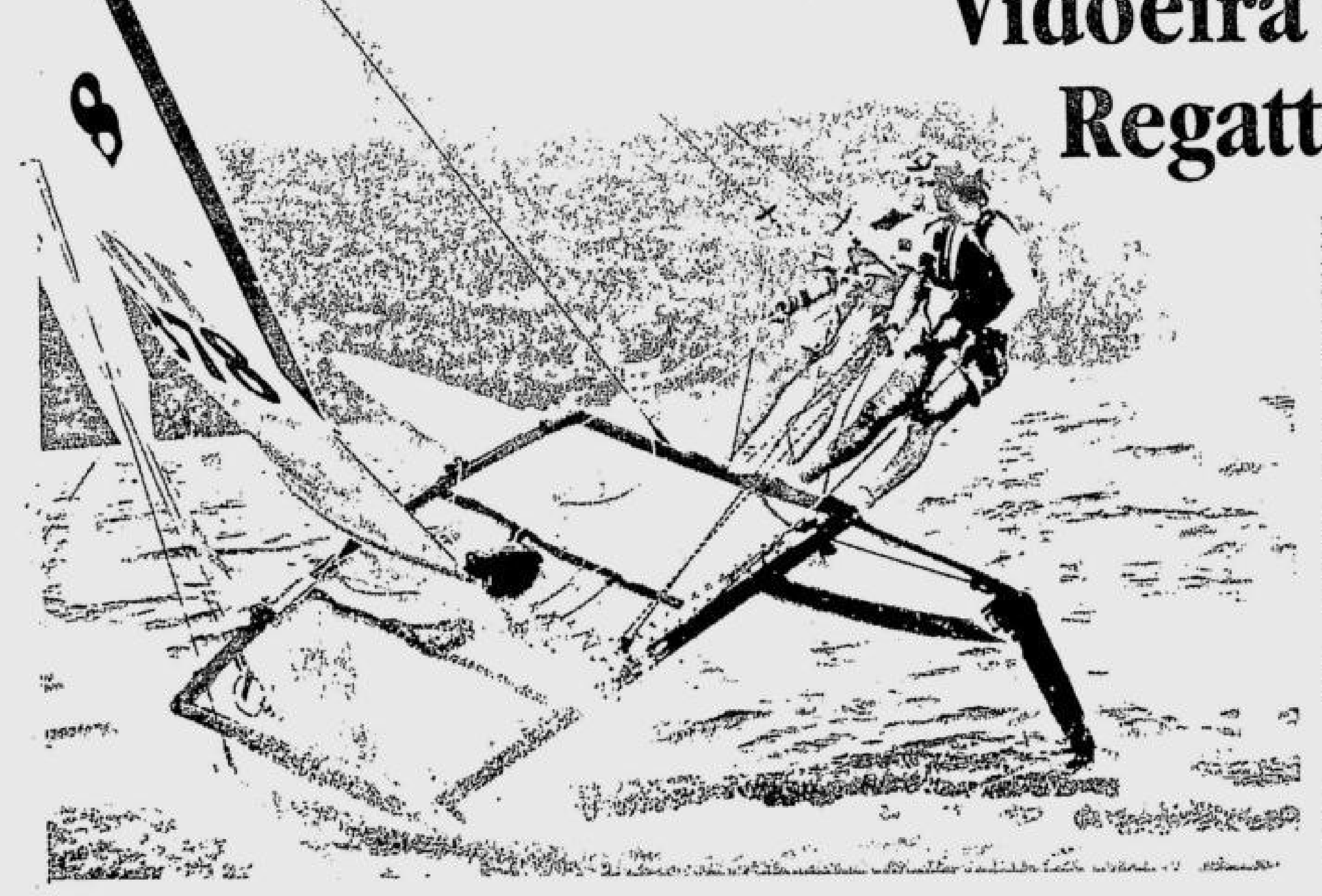
Young gymnasts take the floor Sunday

ASPIRING YOUNG GYMNASTS take the floor as the 2007 Bea Lucero Gymnastics Cup Invitational International Competition reels off on Sunday at Club Gymnastica gym in Pasig City.

More than 130 youngsters representing seven teams vie for honors in the prestigious meet named after multi-titled gymnast Bea Lucero.

There will be competitions in Levels 1-4 for the 6-under, 7-9, and 10-above age groups. Now on its 8th year, the Bea Lucero Gymnastics Cup is held annually as part of the commitment of Milo to promote sports in the grassroots level and develop the country's next sports champions. Competitions in the Milo-sponsored tournament start at 8 a.m.

Vidoeira first female Regatta champion



MARIA VIDOEIRA OF PORTUGAL AND Bing Tendero of the Philippines shared top honors in the recent fourth Buena Vista Round Taal Volcano Regatta held at the Taal Lake Yacht Club (TLYC) in Talisay, Batangas.

Vidoeira, who also topped the Hobie 16 Masters Class, is the first lady sailor to win the regatta.

Other top winners were Mario Malazarte (streaker class), Edmund Umali (open dinghy), Ed Gallego (Hobie Class B), Charlie Clement (Hobie Class A) and Roy Espiritu (home-built).

Filipino and foreign sailing teams encircled the scenic Taal Lake and the Volcano Island during the two-day regatta.

Romina S. Austria

THE PORTUGAL-Philippine pair of Maria Vidoeira and Bing Tendoro slices through the waters of Taal Lake on their way to victory.

SPORTSWATCH

Senate, DBM top badminton for a cause

THEY CAME TO SHOW THAT YES, THEY do care.

Government offices trooped together at the Metro Badminton recently to join the first Government Invitational Badminton Tournament and raise funds for the children of the Pangarap Foundation.

The Senate of the Philippines ruled the men's doubles and women's doubles division of the tournament backed by Mannasoft Technology and Generali Philippines.

DBM-Procurement Service topped the mixed doubles category in the tournament also participated in by Duty-Free, PCSO, Philippine Postal Savings Bank, and the PNOC-Energy Development Corporation.

Manila, Calabarzon darters cross paths

METRO MANILA AND CALABARZON darters are set to duel in the Inaugural Doubles Tournament on Dec. 9 at the Games and Spirits Sports Bar in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The tournament is part of a series of monthly events that will culminate with a national championship, the Laguna Open Darts Championship in March next year.

Mode of play is Classified Doubles, Killers-01-Choice (best-of-3) for the winners bracket and 701 one-leg for the loser's bracket. Entry fee per player is P150. Registration begins at 2:30 p.m. games at 4:00 p.m. sharp. For inquiries, call 09217350631.

Mighty Filters nip stubborn Sulpicio

THE MIGHTY FILTERS DOWNED SULPIcio, 85-83, to boost their title campaign in the Manila Amateur Basketball League held recently at the Arellano gym in Manila.

Geo Sia, Edrick Ferrer and Terence Tang starred for the Mighty Filters Kings anew as they came through with big baskets down the stretch to top the first round with a 4-1 record.

Sia led all scorers with 16 points as he threw his weight inside the paint, while Tang, older brother of La Salle ace playmaker, TY, chipped in 13 points.

New vehicles await fastest derby winners

A BRAND NEW TOYOTA INNOVA AND A passenger jeepney await the fastest-win champions in Makati Coliseum's *Pamaskong Salpukan* 6-cock derby on Monday, Dec. 10.

Hosts Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co said the fastest win champ on Dec. 29 will get the Toyota Innova, while the fastest win champ on Dec. 26 will drive home the passenger jeepney.

Entry fee is P11,000. For details, call 8963545 and 8956475 or 4898828.

Pasay stages 3-cock derby

A 3-COCK DERBY UNFOLDS TODAY AT the Pasay City Cockpit with more than 50 fights on the cards. Matches start at 6 p.m.

Close to 35 participants will compete in today's event to be hosted by PCC employees and assisted by pit managers Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano. Entry fee is P5,500.

Pasay Cockpit's regular Friday derby returns on Dec. 14 via the DMG Zabong 5-cock derby.

Please call the PCC office for complete info: 8431890, 8431746 and 8166750.

Roligon derby starts today

THE 204-ENTRY "WEDER WEDER LANG" 5-cock derby gets underway today at Roligon Mega Cockpit featuring the third and last day of eliminations. Matches start at 5 p.m.

Hosts Rolly Ligon said a participant must score at least one point to qualify for the finals on Saturday, Dec. 8.

The champions and runners-up stand to receive a guaranteed prize of P2 million.

For details, please call 8512275, 8331638 and 8529812.

Suns nip Pacers; Nets dump Cavs

THE PISTONS' Tayshaun Prince (left) and the Hawks' Josh Childress battle for a loose ball in their NBA game Tuesday. AP

NEW YORK—AMARE STOUDEMIRE scored 42 points and grabbed 13 rebounds to help the visiting Phoenix Suns rally past the Indiana Pacers 121-117 on Tuesday.

The Suns blew a 15-point lead and had to rally from a four-point deficit in the final 71 seconds to win their third in a row and improve to 14-4.

"We just struggle to play 48 (good) minutes now," said Phoenix coach Mike D'Antonio.

"I don't care how we win, just that we do. Amare played as well as he has tonight."

JAMES' injured left fingers REUTERS

Steve Nash hit two free throws with 1:11 left and then nailed a three-point shot with 42 seconds remaining to put his team ahead to stay. He finished with 18 points and 17 assists.

"Steve hit a big-time shot," said Indiana coach Jim O'Brien. "That's what two-time MVPs do."

Shawn Marion added 14 points and 12 rebounds for the Suns, playing the second of a five-game road trip.

Jermaine O'Neal scored a season-high 30 points to lead the Pacers, who also got 22 points from Mike Dunleavy and 19 points and 12 assists from Jamaal Tinsley.

"That was a tough loss," said O'Brien. "We competed better in the second half than we did in the first half."

The visiting New Jersey Nets took advantage of the absence of LeBron James because of a finger injury and clubbed the Cleveland Cavaliers, 100-79.

Richard Jefferson scored a season-high 36 points and Vince Carter had 19 as James missed his third game with the injury.

Kobe Bryant shook off a bout of stomach flu to score 20 points and power the Los Angeles Lakers to a 116-95 road win over Minnesota.

The Detroit Pistons delivered a 106-95 road win over the Atlanta Hawks, the Pistons winning their fourth in a row.

James sits out anew

Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James, the leading scorer in the National Basketball Association, sat out again Tuesday with a sprained left index finger.

His absence from the Cavaliers' contest against the New Jersey Nets marked the third straight game James has been sidelined.

The 22-year-old superstar was hurt in the first half of Wednesday's loss to the Detroit Pistons, when he was fouled by Nazr Mohammed.

Through 16 games this season, James is averaging 30.7 points, 7.6 rebounds and 8.1 assists.

Reuters, AFP

Raikkonen returns, tests for Ferrari

LONDON—FINN KIMI RAIKKONEN REported back to work as Formula One world champion on Tuesday, testing for Ferrari for the first time since he won the title in October.

Raikkonen, who beat McLaren's British rookie Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso by a single point in Brazil, was fourth quickest on a cool and sunny day at the Jerez circuit in southern Spain.

Neither 22-year-old Hamilton nor double world champion Alonso, the Spaniard who has still to find a race seat for 2008 after his divorce from McLaren, were present although Hamilton is testing on Wednesday.

Renault, still looking like Alonso's most likely destination, said in a statement that Brazilian Nelson Piquet junior would be in their car all week for the final test of the year.

Piquet is strongly tipped to take one of the Renault slots next season, with Italian Giancarlo Fisichella released to test with Force India.

Timesheets

Piquet was fifth fastest with BMW Sauber's Nick Heidfeld leading the timesheets in 1:19.042, and Honda's Jenson Button second.

The top two were trying out Bridgestone's 2009 development slick tires.

McLaren have yet to name a replacement for Alonso, with Spanish test driver Pedro la Rosa a possible option from within the team as is Briton Gary Paffett. De la Rosa was third fastest, with Paffett seventh.

BMW, still to confirm their reserve driver for 2008, tried out Estonian Marko Asmer and gave Spaniard Javier Villa his first taste of a grand prix car.

Asmer, 23-year-old champion in this year's British F3 series, was more than half a second quicker than his younger rival according to BMW's unofficial times.

BMW's former test driver Timo Glock made his debut for Toyota, with whom he will race next year, along with new Japanese reserve Kamui Kobayashi.

Williams gave 20-year-old German Nico Hulkenberg his Formula One test debut.

ANNIKA Sorenstam warms up on the driving range at the Vines in Perth. AFP

Sorenstam leads International side vs Asia's best in Lexus Cup

PERTH, AUSTRALIA—THE THIRD Lexus Cup would be won by the team that best adapted to the unusually large greens at the Perth course, International captain Annika Sorenstam said here Wednesday.

The season-ending LPGA teams tournament pits 12 international players against 12 of the best from Asia over three days in foursome, fourball and singles play, starting Friday.

Eleven of the top 20 women in the world are playing and Sorenstam leads an International side that is regarded as the strongest yet fielded as it tries to reclaim the title won in Singapore in 2006 by Asia, which this time will be led by Korean star Se Ri Pak.

The testing Vines Resort and Country Club course boasts some of the biggest greens in world golf and Sorenstam said that while the fairways were "straightforward," placement around the greens would be key to success over the weekend.

The 37-year-old Sorenstam is making her third Lexus Cup appearance and said the rivalry between the teams was building, with Team International winning the inaugural event in 2005.

"I think the first year, it didn't seem like the Asians really knew what was going on," she said.

"Last year, they came out with a totally different team and a totally different attitude and they played well.

"This year, we want it (the title) back and they know what is going on." Sorenstam, who said she was looking forward to ending her year in the more relaxed environment of team golf, believes her side is the strongest international team yet.

"We have a good team, no doubt," she said. "Suzann Pettersen has had a fabulous year, Cristie Kerr won the (US Women's) Open.

"Throughout the year, we have tried to recruit the best players."

Teams—International: Annika Sorenstam, Angela Park, Brittany Lincicome, Catriona Matthew, Cristie Kerr, Maria Hjorth, Morgan Pressel, Natalie Gulbis, Nicole Castrale, Nikki Campbell, Stacy Prammanasudh, Suzann Pettersen

Asia: Se Ri Pak, Amy Hung, Ayako Uehara, Candie King, In-Kyung Kim, Jee Young Lee, Jeong Jang, Ji-Yai Shin, Meena Lee, Sarah Lee, Seon Hwa Lee, Shi Hyun Ahn.

AFP

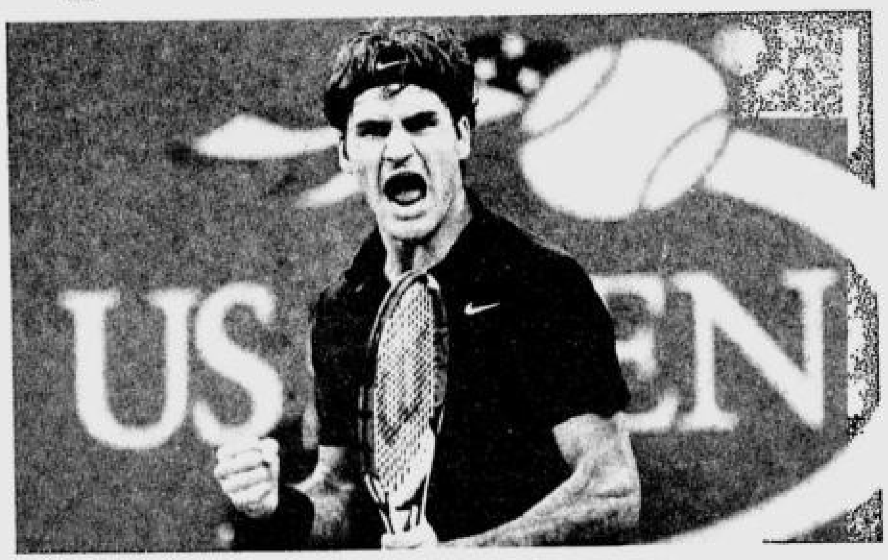
Australian Open boasts strongest field ever

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—THE Australian Open in January will have the strongest field in the tournament's 103-year history—all top-ranked 100 men and 99 of the top 100 women.

Three-time champion Roger Federer heads the men's draw, while top-ranked Justine Henin—the 2004 champion—will be the women's No. 1 seed.

Following Wednesday's release of the first entry lists, the only omission from the top 100 women was Russia's Vera Dushevina, ranked 44th, who was forced to withdraw due to a right-foot injury.

With 104 direct acceptances into the men's draw, the ranking cutoff is at its lowest ever at 103, which includes Belgian Xavier Malisse, who has an injury-protected ranking of 31.



THREE-TIME champion ROGER Federer heads the men's draw. REUTERS

The women's draw includes 108 direct acceptances and also has its lowest ranking cutoff ever at 108, which includes Russian Evgenia Linetskaya, who has an injury-protected ranking of 92.

Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said he was thrilled with the strength of the lineup for the Jan. 14-27 tournament.

"At this stage, it's the strongest field in the event's history and we're sure this will equate to one of the most exciting tournaments yet," said Tiley.

The men's field will be completed by 16 qualifiers and eight wild cards, while the women's field has 12 qualifiers and eight wild cards to be added.

The women's field has five former champions in Henin, the Williams sisters—Venus and defending champion Serena—Amelie Mauresmo and Lindsay Davenport. The men's field includes three past winners—Federer, Thomas Johansson and Marat Safin.

AP

Hatton brushes off Mayweather's traditional trash talk

HATTON: Blue-collar hitman AP

MAYWEATHER: $20-M richer. AP

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—UNDEFEATED welterweights Ricky Hatton and Floyd Mayweather arrived here Tuesday ahead of their weekend championship showdown with the Englishman brushing off Mayweather's trademark trash talk.

US veteran Mayweather, 38-0 with 24 knockouts, defends his World Boxing Council crown Saturday against Hatton, 43-0 with 31 knockouts, in a clash of styles—the flashy "Pretty Boy Floyd" and the blue-collar "Hitman".

"The fight won't go the distance. I can promise you that," Mayweather said. "Ricky Hatton has never faced anyone with any talent like I have.

"All the British fans coming to the fight are going to have the chance to be part of the Floyd Mayweather experience."

Hatton told a cheering throng of British supporters to "come and watch me take the belt from this clown."

"A lot can be said before the fight and he has been saying all kinds of things, but all he's doing is lying to the papers," Hatton said. "He seems like a confident man, but I think he's a bit insecure.

Ricky Fatton

"He calls me all kinds of names—Ricky Fatton. He says that I only fight the 'has-beens.' None of that stuff matters to me. He's training as hard as ever and he's in great shape but I don't think he thinks I'm as good as I am."

"I've never seen one fight where Floyd has taken the bull by the horns and gone after him and that's what he's got to do on Saturday." Mayweather countered by saying, "In front of the cameras he's really acting up. You know what I call him—a camera gangster.

"All my other opponents said they were going to beat me too and I'm still undefeated."

Mayweather has not won by knockout in more than two years. He won decisions over Zab Judah and Carlos Baldomir last year and a split decision over Oscar de la Hoya last May.

Mayweather could take home more than 20 million dollars from the showdown with strong pay-per-view sales, potentially becoming the first fighter with 4 million pay-per-view purchases in one year after a record 2.5 million for the de la Hoya bout.

That could put Mayweather second in 2007 income among US sports figures, trailing only golf star Tiger Woods with his abundant endorsement deals.

AFP

RP five on horns of dilemma

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, THAILand—Coach Junel Baculi faces a dilemma two days before the men's basketball competition gets going at the Keelapirum Stadium here.

Baculi can't make up his mind on who among five shooters would fill up the two remaining slots.

Chris Tiu, Patrick Cabahug, Jonathan Fernandez, Erick dela Cuesta and Jeff Chan, according to Baculi, are all worthy of National team berths.

"*Walang kang itulak kabigin sa limang 'yan* (You can't just bump off any of those five)," said Baculi, who is celebrating his birthday today. "It's really hard to decide who among them will make the 12-man team."

The managers' meeting is scheduled today where the final line-up of all five squads will be submitted.

The 15-man RP squad, backed by Harbour Centre, arrived in this Thai province Tuesday and held two practice sessions yesterday.

The nationals will train again today before they go up against lowly Cambodia on Friday.

"Everyday, we have an evaluation," said Baculi. "They go through the process. I treat them fairly, so I guess *di sila magrereklamo kung di sila makakasama sa* (they won't complain if they wouldn't make the) 12-man team."

Already assured of slots are guards Jason Castro, Fil-Am Gabe Norwood, Boyet Bautista, Eugene Tan, Al Vergara, Beau Belga, Erick Rodriguez, team captain Allan Salangsang, Chad Alonzo and reigning UAAP Most Valuable Player (MVP) Jervy Cruz.

"These 10 players have their certain roles in the team," said Bacul. "They will surely make things happen for us. Add two more players in the team and we'll definitely have a very strong unit."

After Cambodia, the Filipino cagers next take on Indonesia on Dec. 9, followed by Malaysia on the 11th and the host on the 13th, the final day of the single-round robin format event.

Based on what they saw during the scrimmages, team officials led by team manager and Philippine Basketball League (PBL) commissioner Chino Trinidad and assistant Eric Arejola expressed confidence the Nationals will bring home the basketball gold again.

Catalan beats self up for SEAG comeback

By Ernesto A. Gonzales and Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—TWO OF THE four gold medalists in the 2006 Asian Games are back to help boost the Philippine campaign—Rene Catalan of wushu and Antonio Gabica of billiards—in the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

The 6-foot-1 1/2 Catalan was summoned at the last-minute to compete as the country's bet in sanshou's 48-kg division while Gabica, the 9-ball champ in Doha, Qatar last year, is a worthy replacement for former world pool champion Alex Pagulayan, a three-gold winner in the 2005 SEAG who had differences with billiard officials back home and was scratched from the RP roster this time.

Catalan said he was set to become an assistant coach until he was told to claim his old place in the RP roster when the original choice fare badly in a recent world tournament in China.

"*Binugbog ko ang sarili ko para makondisyon uli* (I punished myself in training to get in shape again)" said Catalan, recalling how he went through a crash program of running and sprinting at the oval in the morning then sparring in the afternoon for one week to regain his old stamina and mean form.

From 55 kg, the bachelor from Iloilo City is down to 49 and said he won't have any problem making the weight today.

* * *

The other Asiad winners—boxers Violito Payla and Joan Tipon—are out of the SEAG squad for different reasons. Payla is being rested to boost his chances in the next Olympic qualifier in Bangkok after competing in the world championship while Tipon has been relegated to the national pool where he is trying to pick up the pieces of a once dominant status in the bantamweight division.

24th SEA GAMES
6 • 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

After winning the overall championship with eight golds in Bacolod two years ago, the Filipinos have virtually conceded the team supremacy this time to the host country by fielding a completely new set of fighters in the men's division.

But all four female winners in 2005 are back—flyweight Annie Albania, pinweight Alice Kate Aparri, bantamweight Jouvilet Chilem and lightweight Mitchelle Martinez.

Junel Cantancio, nephew of former Olympian Leopoldo, took Tipon's old slot and the task to retain the bantam title. Orlando Tacuyan Jr, son of a former national fighter who beat Tipon in the last national open, is the featherweight bet.

The other boxing hopefuls are Godfrey Castro, Joegen Lopez, Albert Pabila, Jerry Semillano, Maximino Tabangcora, Junie Tizon and Bill Vicera.

* * *

In joining the celebrations on the 80th birth anniversary of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, a special candle-lit ceremony was held last night in front of the Main Press Center inside the vast Suranaree University of Technology campus here, where the bulk of the competition will be held starting tomorrow.

The ceremony attended by local and international media was presided by Prajoj Rathavinij, director general of the govermen's Public Relations Committee in his capacity as chairman of the public relations committee of the Games.

* * *

Covering these Games has become so expensive for journalists not from here.

With more than 10,000 tourists flocking to this province, rooms have been priced way above their standard rates, with apartments accepting tenants at hotel rates.

There are around 1,000 "tuk-tuk" vehicles (the equivalent of tricycles in the Philippines) and only 20 taxi cabs in the entire province, as cabbies give their services to the highest bidder.

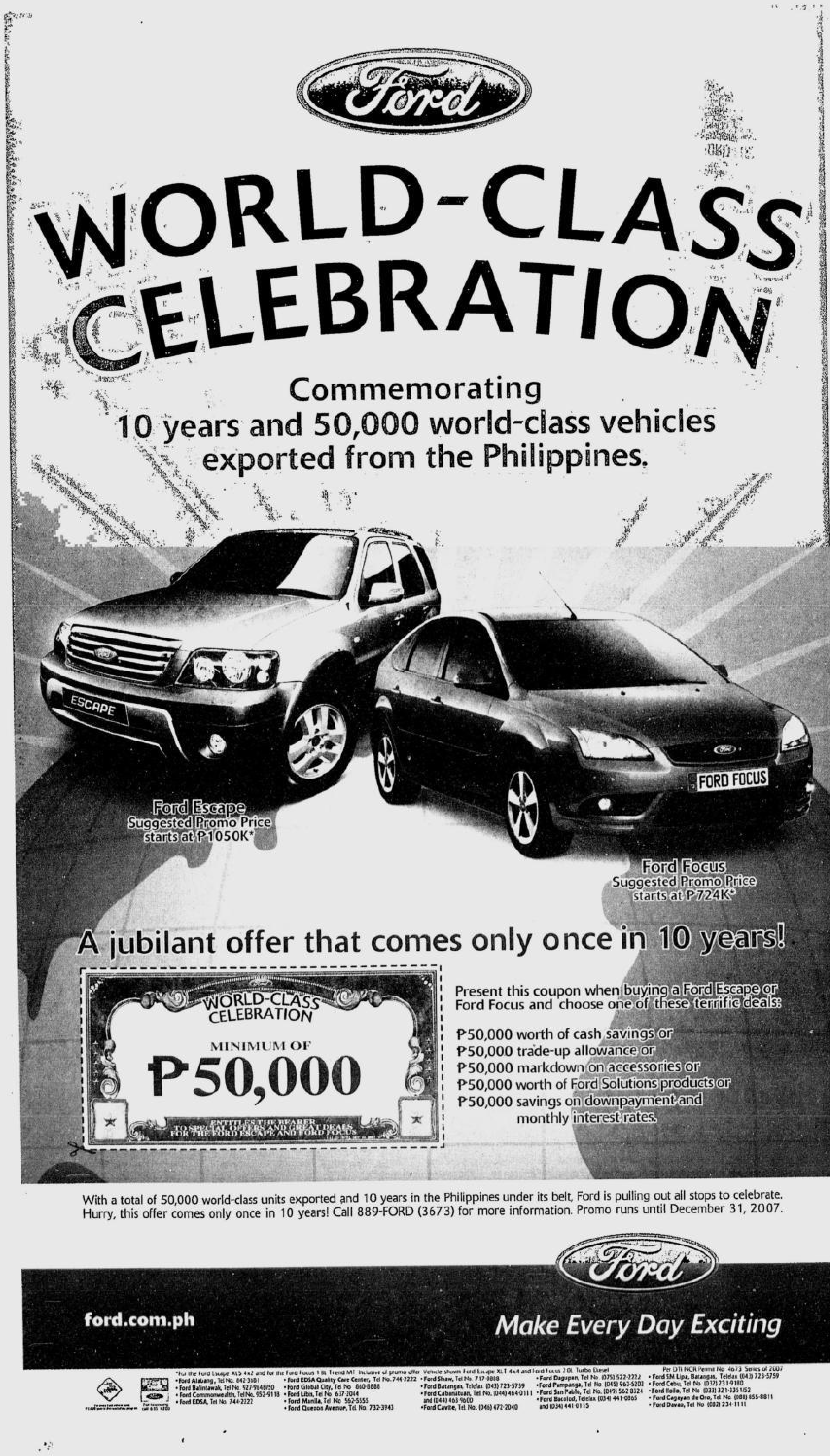
Rent-a-car services go for 3,000 baht a day and they are not easy to find.

* * *

Filipino photographers covering the lavish Opening Ceremonies set for Thursday need not worry anymore about wearing a dark blue suit.

A long line of hanged "Americanas" and matching trousers is occupying one portion of the cavernous Main Press Center, going for 600 baht (almost P900) for a three-day rental.

The organizing Thailand Sports Authority has made it clear in memos circulated on Tuesday that any photographer wishing to shoot in the spectacle will have to come in dark suits and "behave in the proper manner."



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Inflation surged to 3.2% in November

Uptick traced to high oil prices, tight food supply

By Michelle V. Remo

INFLATION ACCELERATED TO 3.2 PERCENT IN NOVEMber from a year ago due to higher oil prices and tighter food supply due to unfavorable weather, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The November inflation rate was faster than the 2.7 percent in October. It also exceeded the forecast by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas of between 2.4 and 3.1 percent.

This was the first time that inflation broke into the 3-percent mark since hitting 3.9 percent in January this year.

The increase in consumer prices in November brought the average inflation rate for the first 11 months of the

INFLATION/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE
- **Palinpinon-Panay** bidding deferred /B4
- **US recession fears,** credit crunch weigh on Asia /B6

Peso breaks into 41:$1; Citi sees 37.50 in '08

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY BROKE INTO THE 41:$1 level for the first time in seven and a half years, hitting an intra-day peak of 41.99 before closing at 42.03 against the US dollar.

Driven by strong overseas Filipino remittances ahead of the Christmas season as well as stock market placement from investors taking position for the coming year, the local currency gained 9 centavos from Tuesday's finish of 42.12 to the dollar. Currency traders said the peso would have climbed further if not for the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' heavy buying to stem the currency's appreciation.

The peso is now trading at its strongest level since hitting 41.73 against the greenback on May 22, 2000, with the market selling down the dollar on expectations of a further weakening next year given the worsening credit crunch in the world's biggest economy.

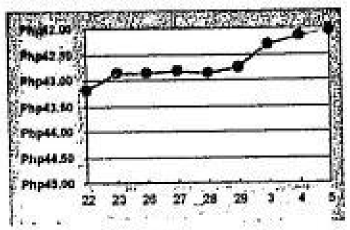
Global banking giant Citigroup Inc. expects the peso to climb to 41.50 to a dollar by year's end and further rise to 37.50 by end-2008 before slowing down ahead of the next presidential elections.

In a new research titled "Asia economic

PESO BREAKS/ B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



NOVEMBER DECEMBER

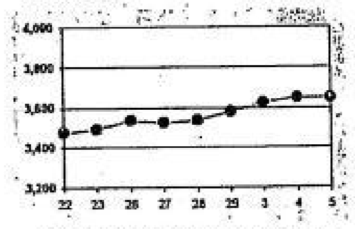
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 42.03 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 5, 2007

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

NOVEMBER DECEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.1 PERCENT HIGHer yesterday on last minute selective buying, dealers said.

Despite a volatile session and a fall in market heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the index managed to claw its way back into positive territory, they said.

The composite index closed up 4.26 points at 3,648.71 from a low of 3,618.97.

The broader all-share index rose 9.16 points to 2,224.56.

Advancers outnumbered decliners 77 to 32, while 52 stocks were steady.

A total of 2.4 billion shares worth P4.4 billion changed hands.

"PLDT continued to be volatile, I guess because investors are still assessing the organizational changes at the company," said Jose Vistan, research director at AB Capital Securities.

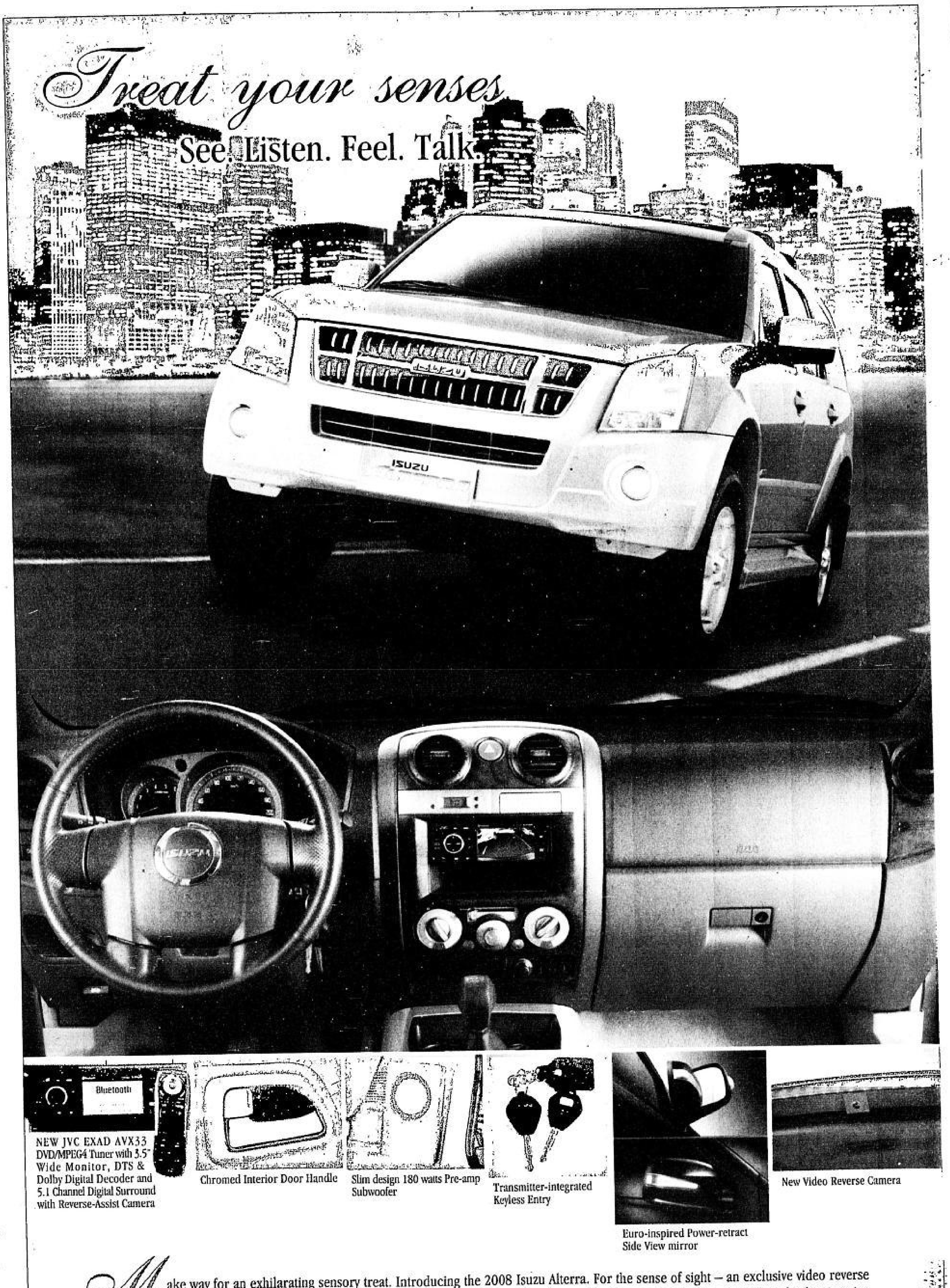
The movement of PLDT, being the country's biggest company in terms of market capitalization, always determines where the market goes, Vistan said.

PLDT fell P30 to P3,060, giving up Tuesday's gains.

Investors are also cautious due to the continued volatility on Wall Street and ahead of the Federal Reserve's interest rate-setting meeting next week, said Vistan.

While some economists are betting the Fed will cut rates again, the chances of the Philip-

SHARES/ B5



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Bayan allocates P2.8B for network, BPO services

By Riza T. Olchondra

BAYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS Inc. (Bayan) yesterday said that it would spend P2.5 billion in 2008, slightly more than its P2-billion budget for 2007, to further expand its fiber optic network and fund the rollout of niche services just for outsourcing and offshoring companies.

Of the total capital spending, the Lopez-owned company set aside P150 million for services geared at BPOs. The rest will be used for expanding its Bayan Wireless Landline network, chief executive Tunde Fafunwa told reporters.

Chief technology officer Brigs Merin said separately that the focus on BPOs would fulfill Bayan's promise as early as September 2006 that the company would develop niche products and services for the enterprise market.

These enterprise products include data storage and recovery systems as well as online tracking of dedicated voice and Internet circuits for big clients. These are currently promoted under the Bayan Business brand.

Merin said the Bayan Business products and services differentiate Bayan from other companies who are more popular in the consumer market.

Bayan also sees the BPO-geared products and services as a new revenue stream, Fafunwa added.

A market study conducted by the Institute for Development and Econometric Analysis (Idea) Inc. found that the addressable global market for BPOs was $300 billion. The Philippines is serving only 2 percent of the total demand. The country is seen to increase its share of the market to 4 percent in the next two years.

"The investment figures show this clearly. Outsourcing and offshoring investments in the Philippines reached P9.42 billion in 2006. As of July this year investments have reached P8.28 billion. This indicates that this sector is bound to grow much faster than it did last year," former economic planning secretary Cayetano Paderanga of Idea said.

Inflation surged to 3.2% in November

From page B1

year to 2.7 percent.

Core inflation, which excludes the volatile prices of selected food and energy items, settled at 2.3 percent in November, slowing down from 2.4 percent the previous month.

"Uptick from the October (inflation) figure of 2.7 percent was expected due to hikes in prices of selected commodities, including oil and feeds in the global market," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters. ***(See related story on page B3.)***

The NSO said the inflation rates for major commodity groups rose in November: Food, beverage and tobacco, 3.9 percent from 3.5 percent the previous month; fuel, light and water, 2.1 percent from one percent; and services, 4.4 percent from 3.5 percent.

The rate for housing and repair eased to 1.1 percent from 1.2 percent; miscellaneous items, 1.3 percent from 1.4 percent; and clothing, 1.9 percent (the same as in October).

The NSO said the inflation rate for food alone accelerated to 4 percent in November from only 3.5 percent in October.

The increasing oil prices in the world market raised concerns that inflation may no longer be benign next year.

CURRENCIES

December 5, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.677140	1.000000	42.2240
Japan	Yen	0.006173	0.009116	0.3849
United Kingdom	Pound	1.394502	2.059400	86.9561
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.086913	0.128353	5.4196
Switzerland	Franc	0.606756	0.896057	37.8351
Canada	Dollar	0.669110	0.988142	41.7233
Singapore	Dollar	0.468350	0.691659	29.2046
Australia	Dollar	0.591388	0.873362	36.8768
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.808069	2.670156	112.7447
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.181049	0.267373	11.2896
Brunei	Dollar	0.466736	0.689275	29.1039
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000073	0.000108	0.0046
Thailand	Baht	0.022223	0.032819	1.3857
UAE	Dirham	0.184452	0.272398	11.5017
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.476800	62.3564
Korea	Won	0.000734	0.001084	0.0458
China	Yuan**	0.091524	0.135163	5.7071
Denmark	Kroner	0.134132	0.198086	8.3640
India	Rupee	0.017217	0.025426	1.0736
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.202736	0.299401	12.6419
New Zealand	Dollar	0.516743	0.763126	32.2222
Sweden	Kroner	0.106811	0.157739	6.6604
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.020963	0.030958	1.3072

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Dec. 4, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Dec. 4, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 5, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.3	8.4	8.3	8.4	23,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	58.5	58.5	58	58.5	1,429,600
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	62.5	63	62	62.5	4,106,500
748	544	China Banking Corp.	670	675	665	670	5,390
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	21	23	1,100
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	140,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company	57	59	57	59	2,591,400
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	43.5	44.5	43.5	44.5	162,100
68	46	Philippine Savings Bank	60.5	60.5	60.5	60.5	2,200
39.57	20	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	24.75	24.75	24.5	24.5	284,500
90	63	Security Bank Corp.	71	72.5	71	72.5	640,400
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	44	44	43.5	44	581,900
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.96	1.98	45,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.75	245,300
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	5	5	4.9	4.95	169,000
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.1	3.2	3.05	3.2	2,468,000
3.1	1.32	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	11,000
1,390.00	260	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,080.00	1,140.00	1,080.00	1,140.00	1,410
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.5	418,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	1,055,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.35	570,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	59	62.5	59	60.5	1,059,400
92	51.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	67	72	67	72	2,493,800
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	16.75	17.25	16.75	17.25	4,774,200
105.45	27.73	Manila Electric Company	76.5	79.5	76.5	77.5	3,018,100
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	7.1	7.1	6.9	6.9	4,280,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	6	6.1	5.9	6	3,937,000
14.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	7	7.3	7	7.3	12,000
2.04	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.4	5,518,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.8	4.85	4.8	4.8	137,000
2.32	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.56	1.58	1.52	1.58	570,000
61	39.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	52	52	51.5	51.5	384,400
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.8	9	8.8	9	2,000
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	900,000
3.15	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.75	580,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. A	50.5	50.5	50	50	72,500
88	43	San Miguel Corp. B	50.5	51.5	50.5	50.5	411,800
0.66	0.33	Swift Foods Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.45	150,000
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.75	2,138,400
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
19.5	7.3	Concrete Aggregates Corp. A	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	5,000
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp.	4.6	4.65	4.55	4.65	647,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	2,157,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1	1.02	1	1.02	1,114,000
23	1.7	TKC Steel Corp.	8.9	8.9	8.6	8.6	557,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.2	4.25	4.2	4.25	316,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.17	Picop Resources Inc	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,640,000
9	6.2	Splash Corp.	6.4	6.7	6.4	6.6	699,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	33.5	34	33.5	33.5	66,000
0.185	0.055	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.125	23,730,000
1.28	0.29	APC Group Inc.	0.61	0.66	0.61	0.64	4,460,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. A	2.48	2.5	2.48	2.5	177,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	49,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. B	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	35,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	5,107,000
0.021	0.0095	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	9,000,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.5	19,182,000
1.38	0.59	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	100,000
1.5	0.38	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	80,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.48	2.5	2.46	2.48	1,863,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3	3	3	3	1,000
645	400	Ayala Corp.	570	570	565	565	205,300
15.25	7.39	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.25	13.25	12.5	12.75	48,000
5.8	1.64	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4	4.1	4	4.05	7,171,000
12	5.1	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10	10	10	10	66,000
8	3.25	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.5	7,000
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	24,000
14.5	8.9	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.25	634,200
2.6	1.28	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
2.65	1.42	Keppel Philippines Holdings Inc. B	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	25,000
22.75	1.42	Lodestar Investment Hldgs Corp.	20	22.75	20	22.75	4,145,100
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.1	6.2	890,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	19,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. A	0.26	0.26	0.245	0.26	136,980,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	2,500,000
452.5	268.53	SM Investments Corp.	342.5	342.5	337.5	340	91,650
0.73	0.14	Sinophil Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	790,000
1.06	0.61	Solid Group Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.62	0.62	100,000
2	0.92	South China Resources Inc.	1.5	1.58	1.4	1.58	21,000
0.75	0.12	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.31	14,530,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	1	A Brown Company Inc.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.5	449,000
1.06	0.4	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	250,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.75	39,153,800
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	122,000
4.7	3.05	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	10,000
2.7	1.25	Cityland Development Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	30,000
0.86	0.39	Crown Equities Inc.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	510,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.36	0.36	4,100,000
0.99	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.82	0.76	0.82	106,380,000
6.9	1.08	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	5,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.24	4,580,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.04	1.08	1.04	1.04	6,776,000
2.44	1.3	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.48	1.54	1.48	1.5	65,392,000
0.49	0.11	Gotesco Land Inc. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
2.9	1.18	Keppel Philippines Properties Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	300,000
4.6	2.05	Megaworld Corp.	4	4.15	4	4.1	34,458,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.85	3.9	3.75	3.85	278,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.-Warrants	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.65	862,000
0.7	0.13	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.34	0.35	0.32	0.34	17,020,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.45	300,000
9.2	1.7	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	25,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.25	2,787,800
5.9	1.93	SM Development Corp.	4	4	4	4	622,000
13.5	7.76	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.5	11	11.5	7,443,000
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	101,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	1.92	2	1.82	1.9	723,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.55	0.59	0.55	0.59	1,850,000
0.49	0.09	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	300,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5	5	4.95	5	5,671,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34	34.5	34	34.5	66,700
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc.	7.9	8.3	7.9	8.2	2,122,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc.	8	8.2	8	8.2	314,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.36	62,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,550.00	1,600.00	1,550.00	1,600.00	42,690
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,060.00	3,105.00	3,045.00	3,090.00	106,890
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7	7.1	6.8	7.1	2,162,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,100,000
15.5	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	13	14	12.75	14	1,685,000
11.5	3.25	IPVG Corp.	8.6	8.8	8.5	8.6	895,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.038	32,700,000
5	1.62	Information Capital Tech. Ventures Inc.	3	3.2	3	3.2	57,000
2.9	1.1	Ionics Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	4,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	3,780,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.36	150,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.047	0.048	0.047	0.048	61,600,000
5.8	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.55	2.7	2.5	2.65	2,369,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.3	1.5	1.28	1.3	3,243,000
6.8	3.6	Asian Terminals Inc.	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	25,000
49	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	47.5	47.5	44	44	918,200
2.7	1.12	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.8	2.7	1.8	2.14	63,962,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.42	2.48	2.3	2.3	393,000
1.34	0.32	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.18	1.34	1.18	1.3	47,716,000
1.2	0.55	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.88	1,160,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	262,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	23	23	20	20	6,600
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8	11,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	11.25	11.25	11	11	53,100
30	6.2	Paxys Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.4	6.4	316,000
472.5	390	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc.	420	422.5	420	420	9,330
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.01	145,000,000
7.2	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	212,000
7.4	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	7.1	7.1	7	7	32,000
21.25	7.8	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	13.25	14.25	13	14	1,064,200
16	8.9	Benguet Corp. A	16	16	14	14.75	237,000
35	24	Benguet Corp. B	27	27	27	27	2,800
12.75	1.96	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9.5	9.7	9.1	9.1	95,000
3.1	0.6	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	1.88	1.9	1.86	1.86	14,200,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.53	0.54	0.51	0.54	107,100,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.58	40,270,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	104,700,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	3,200,000
30	3.6	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	20.5	20.5	20	20.25	402,800
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	119,000,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	17,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.8	2,303,000
49.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	44	44	44	44	4,300
1.36	0.55	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.66	0.74	0.66	0.7	3,590,000
1.8	0.85	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.1	191,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Energy Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	600,000
0.029	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	70,000,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10	10	10	27,000
0.032	0.0085	The Philodrill Corp.	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.028	62,100,000

	AVERAGES		VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	884.87 UP	5.63	13,325,800	594,306,595.00
Industrial	4,304.83 UP	35.76	39,258,600	735,875,735.00
Holding Firms	2,024.82 UP	0.41	315,967,250	468,453,030.00
Property	1,615.25 UP	14.67	299,866,600	1,126,381,680.00
Service	1,860.20 UP	6.22	225,112,510	702,761,150.00
Mining & Oil	8,566.39 DOWN	0.94	674,331,100	170,479,455.00
All Shares Index	2,215.40 UP	7.94		
PSEI	3,644.45 UP	17.57		
		GRAND TOTALS	1,567,861,860	3,798,257,645.00

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Bangko Sentral unfazed by uptick in inflation rate

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS yesterday said the spike in the country's inflation rate in November could be temporary as it maintained a benign view on consumer prices.

This developed as the 3.2-percent year-on-year inflation rate recorded in November exceeded the inflation-targeting BSP's expected range of 2.4-3.1 percent for the period.

Top BSP officials said the uptick in inflation in November was due to a sizeable increase in the prices of volatile items like food and utilities.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said that despite the slight overshooting of the November inflation expectation, "benign" inflation outlook remained over the policy horizon.

"Full-year inflation would be well below the 2007 target (4-5 percent) and within the lower band of our 2008 full-year target (3-5 percent)," Tetangco said.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the appropriate level of money supply and the strengthening peso helped cushion the otherwise strong build-up in inflationary pressure coming from high oil prices and weather-related supply constraints.

"Outlook remains favorable given the easing of core inflation, which suggests the recent shock could be temporary," Guinigundo said.

This developed as some economists said the BSP might no longer cut interest rates this year given rising inflationary pressures.

The BSP has slashed its overnight borrowing rates by 50 basis points (half a percentage point) in the last two months, which many analysts believed was intended to temper the peso's appreciation against the US dollar.

For the whole of the fourth quarter, the BSP expects the country's year-on-year inflation rate staying within 2.6 to 2.9 percent despite skyrocketing oil prices, bringing the yearend average at the lower end of its forecast range.

The BSP earlier projected that annual inflation rate would hover between 2.6 and 3.1 percent this year, much lower than the 4-5 percent ceiling set by the government's economic managers through the interagency Development Budget Coordination Committee.

Banks seen to benefit from hedging scheme

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE BANKS ARE SEEN GETTING A boost from the government's offering of a protection scheme for holders of its overseas sovereign bonds amid expectations of a prolonged global financial volatility.

"In our view, local banks would definitely benefit if ROPs (foreign currency-denominated Philippine government bonds) have lower risk weight, as this could free up regulatory capital, improve capital adequacy ratio and give banks room to grow risk assets without having to raise additional equity," Deutsche Bank said in a recent commentary.

The government will soon launch a pioneering instrument that will offer warranty to holders of its foreign currency bonds or ROPs. The new instrument seeks to make the securities attractive and thus curb any selloff by fickle investors in times of global financial turbulence.

The new instrument seeks to match specific peso securities to holders of warrants. Unlike foreign currency-denominated bonds, peso-denominated government securities held by local banks have zero-risk weightings under the BSP rules.

This protection scheme will be offered to all bondholders through an auction but is seen attracting Philippine banks, which hold as much as 80 percent of the government's offshore debt paper, based on an earlier estimated by the International Monetary Fund.

Deutsche Bank said the warranty scheme would address a "slowing" demand from the government securities' biggest buyers—local banks.

Under the new Basel 2 capital adequacy guidelines, the capital requirement on these bonds will be implemented on a staggered basis in order to minimize market disruption. A third of the (100 percent) capital charge was required for exposures starting July 1, two-thirds starting Jan. 1, 2008 and full capital charge starting Jan. 1, 2009.

Aside from the Basel 2 accord, Deutsche Bank said local banks were refinancing their maturing US dollar subordinated debt issuances into peso IOUs.

"Since banks are required to match their currency positions, we estimate the refinancing of tier 2 could remove $625-million worth of demand," Deutsche Bank.

The bank said it was yet unclear how the paired warranty would affect the credit rating of the foreign currency-denominated government bonds.

"But, even without a rating improvement, the risk weighting could come down as they effectively become peso bonds, which are zero risk weighted under Basel 2," Deutsche Bank said.

Tax effort continues to slide to 14.4%

By Michelle V. Remo

FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT to increase tax collection commensurately with the growth of the economy led to a continued drop in the country's tax effort as of the third quarter.

Tax effort, a closely watched economic indicator, settled at 14.4 percent in January to September this year, falling from 14.7 percent in the same period last year.

The latest tax effort also kept the country off track to meet the government's official target of 15.2 percent for the full year.

The year-on-year drop in the tax effort recorded as of the third quarter maintained the decline as of the first half. Earlier reports said that in the first half, the tax effort hit only 13.8 percent, falling from 14.7 percent in the same period last year.

Tax effort is the national government's tax collection as a percentage of the country's gross domestic product. It measures a government's ability to translate economic growth, which results from higher corporate and individual income, into increase in tax collection.

The tax effort in the first three quarters of the year was a result of the P4.73 trillion in gross domestic product, a measure of economic output and the P683.32 billion in taxes and fees collected by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs and other government offices.

The declining tax effort is delaying efforts to bring the figure back to pre-Asian financial crisis levels. The tax effort reached a high of 17 percent in 1997, but the adverse effects of the crisis on tax collection resulted in lower figures in the succeeding years.

Last year, the tax effort was recorded at 14.3 percent.

Peso breaks into 41:$1 ...

From page B1

prospects for 2008," Citi was most bullish on the Philippine peso, the Indian rupee and Chinese renminbi among emerging Asian currencies for the coming years. But it also projected that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would slash its benchmark interest rates by another 75 basis points next year to temper the local currency's sharp appreciation.

"Policymakers will likely guard against steepening onshore-offshore rate differential that can attract speculative flows and artificially boost the peso," Citi said.

The BSP's overnight borrowing rate is at 5.5 percent and its lending rate at 7.5 percent—the lowest since the independent central bank was created in 1993.

On the other hand, the US Federal Reserve's benchmark funds rate is at 4.5 percent and widely expected to go down to 4.25 percent during the US central bank's next open market committee meeting on Dec. 11.

Citi said the peso would continue to strengthen on robust overseas remittance flows, a weak US dollar, a favorable growth outlook that appeals to portfolio flows and foreign direct investments as well as sustained fiscal consolidation.

However, Citi said the currency's appreciation may be tempered in 2009 as the presidential elections draw near.

"Bouts of offshore investor risk aversion likely to peak in the first half of 2008 and political noise particularly as we near 2010 would be distractions," Citi said.

"As we near elections in 2010, political risk premium would gradually heighten, likely to stall upbeat economic momentum and compel market consolidation," it noted.

The bank said the country's good economic growth prospects for 2008 and 2009, including a favorable operating environment, could enable the domestic economy and local markets to absorb increased political risk premium.

But a stronger currency outlook, partially a result of strong remittance flows, would weigh down on the purchasing power of families receiving overseas remittances, hence dragging down consumer demand, Citi said.

"We take some comfort from the view that 50 percent of the remittance flows are sourced outside the United States. Strong currencies outside the United States coupled with lower inflation risk should ease the effects of a strong peso on overseas remittances," it said.

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Palinpinon-Panay bidding deferred

Asset package being revised

By Abigail L. Ho

FOR LACK OF AN ATTACHED steam sale agreement (SSA), the bidding for the 192.5-megawatt (MW) Palinpinon geothermal facility and the 146.5-MW Panay diesel-fired power plant package has been postponed for at least two weeks.

The package was scheduled for bidding yesterday, but Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. decided to reset the bid submission deadline for Dec. 19 as it still had to revise the transaction documents for the asset package.

Prior to the Dec. 5 schedule, the issue of the absence of an approved geothermal resource supply contract, or steam sale agreement, had already been raised as the Palinpinon plant could not be sold without it.

Under RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), National Power Corp.'s geothermal assets and the steam fields that provide fuel to run them will be sold as one package through a public bidding.

However, since PNOC Energy Development Corp., the operator of the geothermal steam fields, also undertook its own privatization exercise, the sale structure approved for Napocor's geothermal assets was for the plants to be sold not with the actual steam fields, but with steam sale deals attached to them.

The Joint Congressional Power Commission in May 2006 passed a resolution calling for the submission of an SSA that the body has to approve before any of Napocor's geothermal assets can be auctioned off.

No action was taken on the submitted SSA, however. Despite that, the Palinpinon plant was approved to be placed on the auction block on Dec. 5.

But days prior to Dec. 5, with PSALM still optimistic that the sale would push through as scheduled, the JCPC still had yet to take action on the SSA.

Just yesterday, PSALM said it had informed pre-qualified bidders of a "modified timetable" for the Palinpinon-Panay bidding. The final bid submission had been reset for Dec. 19.

The rescheduling of the Palinpinon-Panay bidding pushed back the auction of the decommissioned 200-MW Manila Thermal Power Plant to next year, said PSALM vice president for asset management Froilan Tampinco.

In an earlier interview, he said the sale of the Palinpinon-Panay package was critical to PSALM's targets for the year, as this would allow the agency to achieve a 50-percent capacity privatization level for Napocor's Luzon and Visayas assets.

CARP beneficiaries sell land due to lack of gov't support, study shows

By Amy R. Remo

LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT has forced agrarian reform beneficiaries to sell the land distributed to them back to their former landlords or other buyers, a government study showed.

Completed in 2006, the study prepared by the Department of Agrarian Reform and GTZ, the Federal Republic of Germany's program for sustainable development agency, revealed that several farmer beneficiaries, especially in Luzon and Visayas, were also forced to mortgage their land to raise funds for the development or maintenance of their property.

According to the DAR-GTZ report, about 26 percent of the beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program have already disposed of their land.

In a report, Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman said that as of June 2006, the agency had distributed some 3.72 million hectares to some 4.02 million farmers.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, for its part, has awarded rights covering another 2.94 million hectares.

The DAR-GTZ study revealed that about 41 percent of these agrarian beneficiaries in Nueva Ecija and 53 percent in Laguna had already sold their farm land.

The trend is no different in Iloilo and Quezon, where 35 and 26 percent of the beneficiaries, respectively, opted to dispose of their land, the study showed.

Recent surveys by the Center for Peasant Education and Services in Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon showed that three out of five holders of Certificate of Land Ownership Agreement, have either sold or mortgaged their rights to the land.

According to the DAR-GTZ study, the lack of support services and credit for farmer beneficiaries were the reasons why CARP was not a big success.

"DAR admits that about three million out of the four million farmer beneficiaries did not receive any support services at all," it added.

According to the report, many of those who managed to secure loans failed to pay their amortization. As of 2005, the estimated total of collectibles from CARP beneficiaries amounted to P14.3 billion, but only P2.5 billion was collected.

AME BIOENERGY Corp. president Eugenio R. Puyat II and Philippine Agricultural Development and Commercial Corp. head Marriz B. Agbon sign the memorandum of agreement on the planned investment of $200 million in the development of at least 100,000 hectares of land into jatropha plantations. The signing was witnessed by AME director Manuel D. Garcia, Agriculture Undersecretary Berna Romulo-Puyat and Bionor Transformacion director Agustin R. Garcia.

Gov't campaign vs smuggling of used vehicles, fuels lauded

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE JOINT FOREIGN CHAMBERS IN THE Philippines yesterday lauded government efforts against the smuggling of used vehicles and fuels at the Subic freeport but urged for expanded enforcement.

The JFC groups the American, Australia-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese and Korean Chambers of Commerce and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters.

The chambers represent about 1,700 multinational companies that have substantial investment in the Philippines.

In a statement, the JFC welcomed the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority's announcement that the importation of used passenger vehicles had been suspended for six months until April 2008, during which time, the SBMA, Bureau of Customs, Department of Finance, and Department of Trade and Industry would conduct an audit.

The audit is aimed at determining the extent of smuggling in Subic and recover unpaid excise taxes for the government.

Also, the JFC praised the moratorium on the SBMA's issuance of import permits to two oil trading firms until the payment of correct value added tax, duties and excise taxes on past shipments from the free port into the Philippines are made.

The chambers said they expected the SBMA to release to the public the results of these audits when completed, and carry out necessary legal actions against those that would be proven to have violated the law.

"The measure of success of the anti-smuggling efforts against used vehicles will be whether the official statistic on the formal automotive industry as a percentage of total new registrations for vehicles increase," the JFC said.

"Preliminary data in recent months indicates positive trends, which they hope points to the initial success of the anti-smuggling efforts of the government," it added.

The JFC had previously spoken against used vehicle importation, saying it hampered the growth of the local auto industry, deprives government of substantial tax revenues, and threatens the jobs of thousands of skilled workers.

It said that the matter, if unresolved, would bring to fore allegations of corruption and political influence, questions on policy consistency and lack of political will, while overall eroding investor confidence.

Mining firm raising P800M through IPO

HOLDING FIRM ORIENTAL PENINSULA RESources Group Inc. is raising about P804 million from the sale of 300 million shares through an initial public offering.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Oriental Peninsula underwriter Asian Alliance Investment Corp. said the company had set its final IPO price at P2.68 a share.

Oriental was earlier looking at a price range of P1.98 and P2.98 to generate gross proceeds of between P594 million and P894 million.

In an earlier disclosure, Oriental Peninsula said it would offer the shares from Dec. 6 to 12. The listing date was set for Dec. 18.

The company's market capital is estimated to increase from P2.87 billion to P4.33 billion after it lists 1.452 billion shares, inclusive of the public offer shares.

Proceeds from the offer will help fund capital expenditures and working capital.

Lafayette eyes new investor

ANOTHER INVESTOR GROUP IS LOOKing at acquiring the majority control of Lafayette Mining Ltd (LML).

This developed after negotiations with a previously announced prospective cornerstone investor bogged down.

David Baker, managing director of LML, said he had been informed by Southeast Asian Strategic Asset Fund (Seasaf) about talks with a number of other investors, although the cornerstone investor had "not yet closed the door."

LML is the Australia-based mother company of the Lafayette Group in the Philippines. which has a polymetallic project in Rapu Rapu, Albay.

Seasaf arranged a $15-million investment in LML convertible notes and had been keeping in touch with a number of potential investors for a major structure of Lafayette and the Rapu Rapu project.

Seasaf wants Lafayette and the project to be debt-free and financially stronger. It has asked the potential investors to buy the existing project debts and hedges at a discount.

"If those proposals proceed, the funds that we would have could be made available to the Philippine project and to the Rapu Rapu community and its residents," said Baker.

The project directly employs about 1,000 people, most of whom are from the island itself. It also conducts various activities designed to improve life on the impoverished island for residents. These valuable community activities range from raising the quality of education to providing livelihood projects and basic necessities such as roads, water and electricity.

Lafarge group wins quarry rights in Angono

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN LAFARGE Holdings (Phils.) of French global cement producer Lafarge Group and listed firm Republic Cement Corp. has won the right to take over the quarrying operations of Concrete Aggregates Corp. in Angono, Rizal.

Lafarge and Republic offered P670 million to Concrete Aggregates, a 72.6-percent owned subsidiary of Ortigas & Co. Ltd., for the 15-year operating agreement, thus edging out competitor Holcim Corp.

Under the deal with Concrete Aggregates, a new company will be set up to hold the 15-year operating contract as well as related quarrying assets, including equipment and buildings. At the end of the period, Concrete Aggregates will take over the company from Lafarge and Republic.

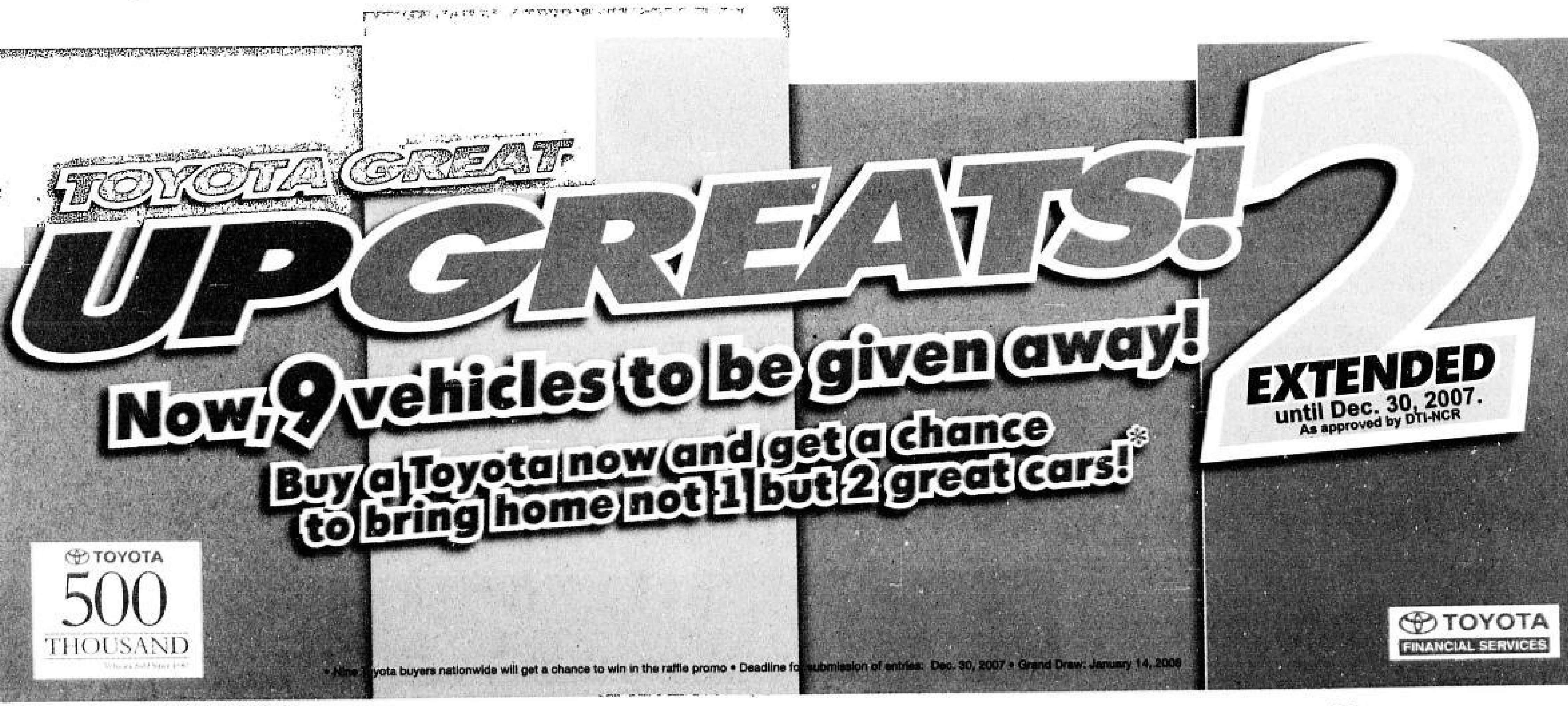
The deal, however, is still subject to the approval of the shareholders of Concrete Aggregates, who are scheduled to hold a special meeting in January next year.

The 200-hectare property where the quarry is located will remain in the hands of Concrete Aggregates.

Concrete Aggregates processes "aggregates" or rock fragments used in construction out of basalt, a type of volcanic rock, found in the Rizal property.

Rex C. Drilon II, Concrete Aggregates executive vice president, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that the company had decided to enter into an alliance with Lafarge and Republic to create synergies between the related construction activities of the two groups.

Republic Cement's Ruby Nitorreda added in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that the purchase of the assets and operation of CAC's basalt quarry would complement Republic's cement manufacturing business, as it gives the company another product to sell to markets in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog.



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From page B1

pine central bank following suit may be slim.

"Firm domestic demand will push up prices further going forward," said Frances Cheung, an economist at Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong.

"In fact, a 3 to 4-percent inflation level would still be comfortable but the central bank will be cautious.

"It would want to see how prices of oil and other commodities will behave in the coming months."

Interest-rate sensitive stocks such as property developers Ayala Land Inc. and Megaworld Corp. rose as other economists still see room for further monetary easing with inflation well below the government's target.

Ayala Land finished up 50 centavos at P16.25, rebounding after a 1.6-percent drop early in the session.

Megaworld advanced five centavos to P4.15.

AFP

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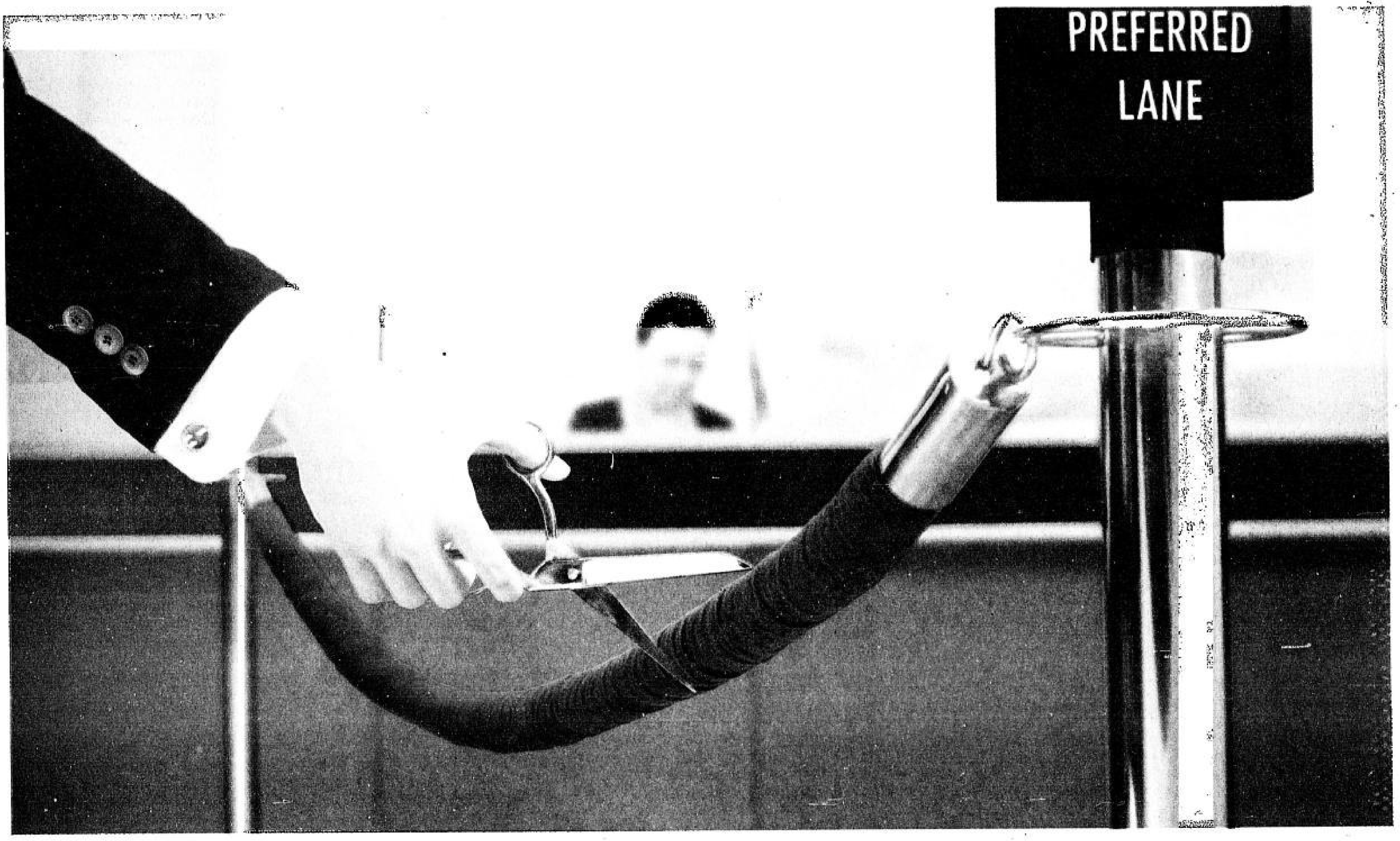

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US recession fears, credit crunch weigh on Asia

SINGAPORE—ASIAN STOCKS dipped and the dollar struggled near recent lows yesterday on growing fears the US economy might slip into recession, hurting demand for oil and industrial metals, which also came under pressure.

Persistent concerns about a credit crunch that has dried up money market funds, slowed takeover activity and hammered profits of financial companies drove investors away from riskier assets, although safe-haven government bonds paused after racking up hefty gains in recent weeks.

In a sign of growing unease about the credit problems and fallout from a deep US housing slump, JPMorgan lowered its 2008 earnings estimates for Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley, sending Wall Street lower overnight.

US Fed seen cutting key rates next week to help economy

"Without a doubt, there are concerns that the US market is showing signs of a slowdown and certainly that is keeping the market in check at the moment," said Lucinda Chan, division director at Macquarie Equities in Australia.

"Everyone is getting risk averse at the moment."

Tokyo's Nikkei average ended the morning session down 0.4 percent, while MSCI's measure of other Asia Pacific stocks slipped 0.2 percent by 0230 GMT.

The Nikkei is down more than 10 percent this year, while the Asia ex-Japan index is still up 35 percent despite November's selloff.

Bank stocks fell across the region, with HSBC down 1.1 percent in Hong Kong and South Korea's Woori Finance Holdings off 2.9 percent. Citigroup's Tokyo shares fell 1.4 percent.

"After a robust selloff, stocks now look cheap to investors but they can't decide if now is the best time to buy," said Naoki Koga, senior fund manager at Toyota Asset Management in Japan.

"The market will probably move to cement the downside in December and January, but a lot still depends on where the subprime problems will go." Australia's central bank kept interest rates at 6.75 percent, as expected, and said the turmoil in global credit markets was clouding the outlook for the world economy.

Weaker commodity prices also weighed on resource stocks.

Oil prices were lower on worries that a US economic slowdown will sap demand in the world's biggest energy user.

A US intelligence report downplaying Iran's nuclear programme eased geopolitical concerns and also weighed on prices.

US light crude traded at $88.40 a barrel, more than $10 below an all-time high of $99.29 a barrel earlier this month.

Industrial metals were under pressure on fears of weaker demand, although prices trimmed some overnight losses in early Asian trade.

Copper prices have fallen around 20 percent since hitting a 16-month high in October on concerns that a credit crunch in the United States could develop into a full-blown recession, and further weakness was expected.

"Until the third quarter of next year, the US financial market will suffer from the debt crisis, but whether that means a recession is still unsure," a Shanghai metals trader said.

The weak US outlook kept the dollar under pressure on speculation the Federal Reserve will cut rates aggressively next week to shore up the economy.

The dollar traded at around 109.8 yen and at $1.4750 to the euro slightly firmer from late New York trade but within striking distance of recent lows.

US interest rate futures show markets are pricing in about a 50-percent chance of a half percentage point rate cut at the Fed's meeting on Dec. 11.

A surprise rate cut from the Bank of Canada overnight weighed on the Canadian dollar and reinforced the perception that central banks are becoming more worried about the credit crunch.

It also heightened expectations the Bank of England could ease monetary policy this week, although the European Central Bank, which also meets this week, is seen unlikely to cut rates due to inflation concerns.

Despite the prospect of lower international interest rates, Japanese government bond markets took a breather after a buying spree that pushed the lead JGB futures contract to a 22-month high in the previous session.

December futures edged 0.13 point lower to 137.52, backing away from what analysts said was technical resistance at 137.80. *Reuters*

Meet the champions–Industry clusters

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

INDUSTRY CLUSTERING HAS BEcome a popular method of developing and enhancing businesses. Under this scheme, a sector's resources are consolidated to increase production, improve access to markets, and bring down marketing and promotion costs.

The term was popularized by Michael Porter in his 1990 book, the Competitive Advantage of Nations. Porter said that industry clustering would result in increased productivity, innovation and stimulation of new players.

Paul Krugman, another author, also talked about the role of geography in business in his 1991 work, Geography and Trade.

But research shows that the concept has actually been around since 1890.

One of the most popular industry clusters in the world is Silicon Valley in the United States, where small backyard information technology companies have grown into multibillion dollar businesses.

This idea prompted the Exporters Development Council, where I sit as a member representing Mindanao, to join hands with key government agencies like the Departments of Trade and Industry; Agriculture and Fisheries and other offices to promote industry clustering in the country.

Clustering in Mindanao

Industry clustering not only addresses the issue of sourcing raw materials, but is also key to harnessing resources of each industry player by allowing them to act as one body or unit for best results.

The initiative did not only show how promising businesses in a certain cluster have become, but also the fact that they have cooperated in addressing key issues confronting the industry where they belong.

I would like to cite the successes of the five industry clustered together in the five geographical areas of the Visayas and Mindanao.

The clusters that performed very well in terms of trade and business were recognized and awarded by President Gloria Arroyo in a ceremony in Malacañang last month. Surprisingly, four of the five awardees came from Mindanao and we should all be proud of their accomplishments.

Sardines-making industry

A good example of a successful industry cluster is the sardines-making industry in Zamboanga del Norte, particularly Dipolog City.

With the Zamboanga Peninsula known as one of the most fertile and biggest fishing grounds in this part of the continent, it is not surprising that sardines-making became one of the biggest industries in the province.

This resulted in the formation of the Isla Sardines of Dipolog Association, a result of government-private sector partnership.

Because of the clustering, the organization was able to demand from raw materials providers reduced rates on volume purchasers and helped processors modernize their equipment and meet international standards.

Caraga food processors

The industry clustering for small and medium enterprises in food processing started in 1999 in the Caraga region. Years later, with the formation of the Caraga Regional Association of Traders and Entrepreneurs in Food, or Create-Food, businesses within the industry clusters received training through the funding of the Philippine-Australia Short-term Training Facility, updating them on modern market strategies and standards that would allow them to penetrate the global arena.

These also paved the way for bigger players to assist the smaller ones in terms of technology and equipment, allowing them to grow together.

Normin veggies

In Northern Mindanao, considered the vegetable capital of Mindanao, industry clustering has taken center stage. With the help of the government and the Growth with Equity in Mindanao-United States Assistance for International Development (GEM-USAID), the vegetable industry created the Normin Veggies and the Normin Corp, two distinct groups that handle different sides of vegetable production.

Normin Veggies takes care of the vegetable production side, looking for new technologies to help growers improve their productivity as well as standards.

Normin Corp., on the other hand, facilitates marketing of the products not only to the Visayas and Mindanao but also to Luzon as vegetables from the region have found their way into the biggest markets in Metro Manila.

Soon, the industry is looking into penetrating the world market, particularly neighboring Asian countries considering the distance and the shelf life of vegetables.

Along the way, the industry clustering concepts not only assure steady supply of vegetables, but also ensure that production gluts will be minimized if not totally eliminated.

The concept also eliminates the layers of traders within the supply chain. The industry was able to form the Normin Veggies Consolidation Center basically, which became the *bagsakan* of products coming from the farms.

Going bananas in Davao

The Davao Region, Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley—the banana capital of the country— are known as top job providers.

Aside from Cavendish bananas, which have found a niche in Japan and other world markets, the region has also been exporting banana chips to Europe, China and other countries.

The industry clustering has identified the strengths and weaknesses of the industry, the opportunities and obstacles and these issues are slowly been addressed.

In the industry cluster plan between 2005 and 2010, the industry hopes to generate at least $4.46 billion in exports, about 145,000 new jobs, 18,000 hectares of new farms planted and about 882,000 metric tons in annual production.

The challenge that the industry has to face is how it could integrate efforts in improving the competitiveness of the industry players in terms of production, storage, packaging and distribution of the products, particularly those coming from the provinces.

With the help of government agencies and the cooperation from local government units, the private-sector led plan is not far-fetched.

Truly, industry clustering is the key to global competitiveness and Mindanao is leading the way!

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong and respected advocate for the development of the island. She is Chair of Joji Ilagan Foundation, Phil. Call Centers Alliance, Mindanao Tech Voc Schools Association; Mindanao Rep, Export Development Council. Email comments jojibian2@yahoo.com)

Oil prices increase in Asia amid mixed Opec signals

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES WERE HIGHER in Asia trade Wednesday amid mixed signals on whether Opec would raise output or keep production quotas unchanged, dealers said.

In afternoon trade New York's main contract, light sweet crude for January delivery, was 37 cents higher at $88.69 a barrel from $88.32 in late US trades Tuesday.

Brent North Sea crude for January delivery rose 47 cents to $90 a barrel.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) is to meet Wednesday in Abu Dhabi, and the cartel's most influential member Saudi Arabia has so far refused to say if it is for or against a production rise.

Other Opec members including Iran, Libya, Qatar and Venezuela have voiced opposition to a hike, insisting the market is well supplied and that demand is falling amid global economic concerns.

"Still we believe (oil) inventories are very comfortable," Qatar's Minister of Energy and Industry Abdullah al-Attiyah, said late Tuesday.

Raising production will further cool prices which have fallen by over $10 since hitting an all-time high of $99.29 on Nov. 21 but that will mean less revenues for Opec's 13 members.

"The upshot is that Opec will surely feel vindicated in its view that supply and demand conditions are nowhere near as tight as recent record high oil prices would suggest," said analysts from research consultancy Capital Economics.

"Either way, the bigger picture is that recent market moves show that commodity prices cannot simply shrug off weaker demand growth in the major economies of the West, and in Japan," they said.

Opec last decided to raise production in September when it agreed to provide the market with an extra 500,000 barrels of oil a day.

The increase took effect on Nov. 1 and raised its daily output quota to 27.25 million barrels.

An Opec delegate, wishing to remain anonymous, hinted Tuesday that the cartel may decide to hike its daily oil output by half a million barrels.

The move would be a "gesture" to the oil market which holds the cartel responsible for soaring crude prices, he added.

The release later Wednesday of US weekly energy reserves for the week to Nov. 30 is also being closely watched by traders as the cold weather starts to kick in, dealers said. *AFP*

US airlines cut capacity growth

DALLAS—SEVERAL MAJOR US AIRLINES outlined plans Tuesday to slow their growth and cut costs to deal with higher fuel prices and the prospect of an economic slowdown that could hurt air travel.

Executives for some carriers also said they were actively planning for airline mergers, although they were careful not to discuss specific combinations.

"We are not standing around waiting for consolidation to happen. We're interested in that," said Jake Brace, the chief financial officer of United Airlines.

Brace said United, a unit of UAL Corp., has no plans to expand its flying in the highly competitive US market, but intends to expand about 15 percent internationally over the next three years.

Delta Air Lines Inc. is also looking to increase its international flying from 25 percent of capacity in 2005 to 40 percent next year.

After heavy losses from 2001 through 2005, US airlines have returned to profitability. They had a great summer-vacation season. Third-quarter earnings were the best in several years, as planes were nearly full and passengers paid higher average fares than they did in the summer of 2005.

But the big traditional carriers are facing ever-tougher competition from low-cost carriers who are expanding rapidly and holding down fares. Executives of the big carriers warned that their comeback is threatened by high fuel costs and uncertainty over the economy.

"We are concerned about growing evidence of slowing economic growth that would inevitably affect passenger demand, coupled with a surge in energy prices," said Southwest Airlines Co. Chief Executive Gary C. Kelly.

Kelly's comments came as Southwest announced its capacity would grow 4 to 5 percent next year. It had initially forecast growth of 8 percent and later scaled back to 6 percent.

Southwest also reported that November traffic grew 2.6 percent, measured by miles flown by paying passengers. That growth, however, failed to keep up with a 6.4 percent increase in capacity.

As a result, average occupancy on Southwest flights slipped to 69.3 percent from 71.8 percent in November 2006.

Those results mirrored numbers late Monday from Houston-based Continental Airlines Inc., which also cut its growth expectations for 2008 to between 2 and 3 percent, down from 3 to 4 percent.

The entire increase will be international—the carrier said it will shrink domestic capacity. *AP*

1.2 BILLION UNITS

Nokia predicts 10% growth in mobile phone market in '08

HELSINKI, FINLAND—NOKIA CORP. said Tuesday it expected the global market for mobile devices to grow 10 percent in 2008 to more than 1.2 billion units, and said it would further enhance its Internet services including providing users with more music.

The world's largest mobile phone maker said its global share of handset sales would increase next year, but gave no figures, and predicted that the worldwide market for Internet services would reach euro100 billion ($145 billion) by 2010.

It announced a deal with Universal Music Group that includes a year's unlimited access to millions of music pieces for Nokia handset buyers, and said it would acquire Avvenu, a US-based company that specializes in online access services.

Nokia also slightly upped its operating margin targets, but markets had expected higher growth and its shares dropped almost 4 percent to euro26.50 ($39.06) in Helsinki.

The highest growth in the global mobile market next year—of more than 15 percent—will be in the Asia-Pacific region, China, the Middle East and Africa, Nokia said. The lowest growth—of less than 10 percent—will be in North America, Europe and Latin America, it added.

Nokia predicted that, globally, there will be 4 billion mobile subscribers by 2009, bringing forward its earlier prediction that the figure would be reached in 2010.

The Finnish company—which said in October that its global market share had grown to 39 percent, from 36 percent in the third quarter of 2006—said it aims to further increase market share in 2008.

Its long-stated goal has been 40 percent although Chief Executive Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo has said the company might raise that target.

Nokia said it aims to reach an operating margin of 16 percent to 17 percent within the next two years, revising an earlier target of 15 percent.

Earlier this year, Nokia unveiled new web-based services and gadgets to help customers download music and play games on handsets—part of a strong push to challenge rivals, including Apple's iTunes and iPod. Now it says it also wants to be the leader on the Internet.

"Nokia's goal is to be the world No. 1 in bringing the Internet to mobile devices," Kallasvuo said Tuesday at the company's annual conference in Amsterdam, Netherlands. "We estimate that in 2010, the total Internet services market will be approximately euro100 billion ($145 billion)."

In Amsterdam, Nokia also announced the deals with Universal and Avvenu. It gave no financial details.

"We set out to create the music experience that people are telling us they are looking for—all the music they want in the form of unlimited downloads to their mobile device and PC," said Anssi Vanjoki, head of the company's multimedia division.

Britain-based Omnifone, which provides unlimited music download services in partnership with major operators such as Vodafone Group PLC, welcomed Nokia's announcement to launch more music for users.

"Consumers will increasingly come to expect unlimited access to music, direct to their mobiles," Omnifone chief executive Rob Lewis said. *AP*

Death Notice

ISABEL ESPIRITU VALENZUELA
Aug. 4, 1916 - Dec. 3, 2007

Her body lies at Loreto Church, Bustillos, Sampaloc, Manila

Interment will be on Dec. 8, 8 a.m. at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

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—John 11:25

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Antonio C. Delgado

Masses will be offered tomorrow, Friday
on the 15th anniversary of his death, December 7, 2007

Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception .... 7:30 a.m.
(Manila Cathedral), Intramuros, Manila

Our Lady of Peace & Good Voyage .... 8:00 a.m.
Antipolo, Rizal

Minor Basilica & National Shrine of San Lorenzo Ruiz . 8:15 a.m.
Plaza Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo

Santuario de San Antonio .... 12:15 p.m.
McKinley Road, North Forbes Park, Makati City

Makati Medical Center Chapel .... 12:15 p.m.
9F Makati Medical Center, Makati City

National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus .... 12:15 p.m.
Dau Street, San Antonio Village, Makati City

Sto. Niño de Paz Chapel .... 5:45 p.m.
Greenbelt Park, Makati City

St. John Bosco Parish .... 6:00 p.m.
Arnaiz Street, Makati City

San Agustin Church .... 6:00 p.m.
Gen. Luna Street, Intramuros, Manila

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish .... 6:30 p.m.
N. Garcia St. cor. Kalayaan Ave., Bel-Air II, Makati City

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ELISA NADYA E. GAMO

who passed away on November 21, 2007

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and in countless ways condoled with us in our hour of bereavement.

Our Mom,

INVENCION "VENI" DULAY SORIO

Joined her Creator on December 4, 2007 at the age of 90.

Her bereaved children **Heidi**, **George**, **Paula**, **Dechin** and **Malet**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Imperial Classic Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Inc., Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, until December 7, 2007, midnight.

She will be moved to Alcala, Cagayan and the interment will be on December 14, 2007.

CLASSIFIEDS

A Capampangan Serenata

A SERENATA OF SOME OF THE finest in Capampangan arts treated guests to a memorable evening as Abe restaurant recently celebrated its very first anniversary in Serendra and announced the opening of its branch in Trinoma.

Invited and walk in guests were delighted to find their favorite dining venue transform into a concert hall where Arti Sta. Rita, one of Pampanga's foremost music arts group, gave an excellent sampling of new works in the region's musical scene. A sumptuous anniversary buffet and the availability of a number of Pampango delicacies gave the celebration the colorful flavors of the gourmet province.

Among the highlights of the evening was the presence of Governor Fr. "Among" Ed Panlilio who did not only mingle with guests but who also joined Arti Sta. Rita in one of their song numbers.

Abé-Where good friends dine is a Larry J. Cruz (LJC) restaurant. For more information, call: 8560526 (Serendra) and 901-5691-92 (TriNoma).

Judge Juan Luna HS '73 Christmas party on Dec. 8

JUDGE JUAN LUNA HIGH SCHOOL Batch 73 will hold an alumni Christmas reunion party on Dec. 8 at Judge Juan Luna High School audio visual room.

The event is set to relive the wonderful high school memories and experiences through a special Christmas festivity, which features activities aimed at fostering camaraderie and recollection of forged friendships on campus. Join and participate in this blissful and meaningful occasion, reminisce the good old days, and amplify our school spirit to incalculable levels with our former classmates.

For details, contact Josie Santillan Jimenez - 480-5393, 233-2370, 252-5231, CP 0915-3793813, Chito Celestial - 455-6202, CP 0918-4089611, Rudy San Gabriel at 0919-4413140, and Mar Delos Reyes at 890-1185, CP 0917-8032021.

2007 PIERRE FAUCHARD ACADEMY PHIL. SECTION CHAIRMAN'S INSTALLATION. Dr. Hermogenes P. Villareal (7th from left) is formally installed as Chair of the Pierre Fauchard Academy (Philippine Section) in ceremonies held at the San Francisco Marriotte Hotel in San Francisco, U.S. Flanking him are (from left) Prof. Mamuro Sakuda, Trustee Region 9, Asia, Alice Lim, Dr. Diampo J. Lim, Dr. James Englander, PFA President and his wife, Dr. Tanaka, Dr. Villareal and wife Violeta J. Villareal, Dr. Elmer Bangloy, Dr. Richard Kozal, PFA Sec. Gen., Dr. Primo Gonzales, Dr. Eliezer Blanes, President, Philippine Dental Association, and Dr. Rey Agcanas.

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral Ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/ Brief Description	Supply, commissioning and testing of one (1) set Metallograph per BSP specifications
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P3,000,000.00
Delivery Period	Within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days after receipt of a copy of the Purchase Order.

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and completed from Y2002 to present amounting to at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC). The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 06 December 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	04 January 2008; 9:30 AM
3. Opening of Bids	22 January 2008; 2:00 PM
4. Bid Evaluation	) These shall be in accordance with) the prescribed periods allowed in) the Implementing Rules and) Regulations (IRR-A) of R.A. No.) 9184 dated 10 January 2003 as) amended.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **P1,500.00**.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 6, 2007)

SAGITTARIUS MINES, INC.

Tampakan Copper - Gold Project

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNICAL SUPERINTENDENT

The Tampakan Copper-Gold Project is a large scale mine development project at feasibility stage. It is located approximately 65 km north-northwest of General Santos City on the island of Mindanao and is managed by Sagittarius Mines, Inc. (SMI).

General Santos has a population of approximately 500,000 people and is accessed by sealed highways, a major deep water port within Sarangani Bay and a modern international airport.

A vacancy currently exists for an Environmental Technical Superintendent based in General Santos City. Reporting to the Resident Manager, the role will preferably have a minimum of 8 - 10 years exposure to environmental management in a mining or industrial setting.

Key responsibilities will include:

- Leadership and development of a team of professionals to ensure the Company's continued compliance and adherence to all relevant statutes, licences, and agreements
- Delivery of a structured Environmental Management System consistent with the principles of ISO14001
- Participation in environmental audits (EMS, Compliance, Sustainability and others)
- Gain the necessary environmental approvals for SMI to sustainably conduct its business, including but not limited to, Environmental Certificates of Compliance and SMI EPA licences
- Management and timely delivery of key information inputs to a range of stakeholders required as part of the Environmental Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)
- Regular communication and report updates to senior site management and Xstrata Copper Project Development Team
- Provision of sound technical advice to SMI exploration teams and other departments on environmental management issues
- Liaison with Philippine statutory agencies and the general community on environmental performance and associated activities
- Effective management of resources and prudent exercise of cost controls on operating and capital budgets within own area of responsibility
- Contractor / consultant management

The ideal candidate should :

- Have a strong educational background in environmental engineering, environmental management or natural resource management
- Have at least 5 years experience in a managerial position
- Be proficient in the use of a range of software applications including Microsoft Access, Excel, Powerpoint, Mapinfo (GIS) and Internet
- Possess sound problem solving, time management and interpersonal skills
- Have well developed communication abilities
- Be strongly oriented on safety and workplace standards
- Exercise a high level of confidentiality
- Demonstrate an ability to lead people and manage resources according to plans and schedules
- Be highly self-motivated with a strong desire to achieve successful outcomes

Submissions are to include a letter of application and CV highlighting professional strengths, qualifications and employment history. Applications close 14 December 2007 and should be emailed or sent to:

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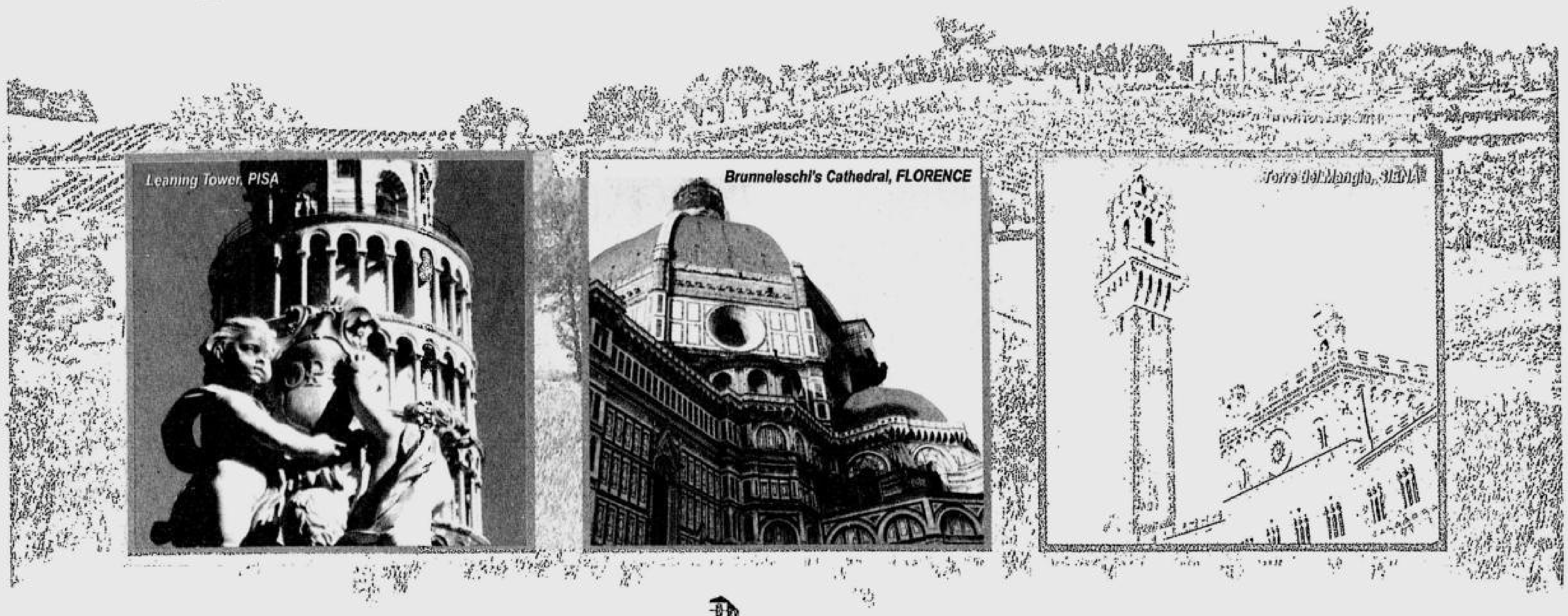

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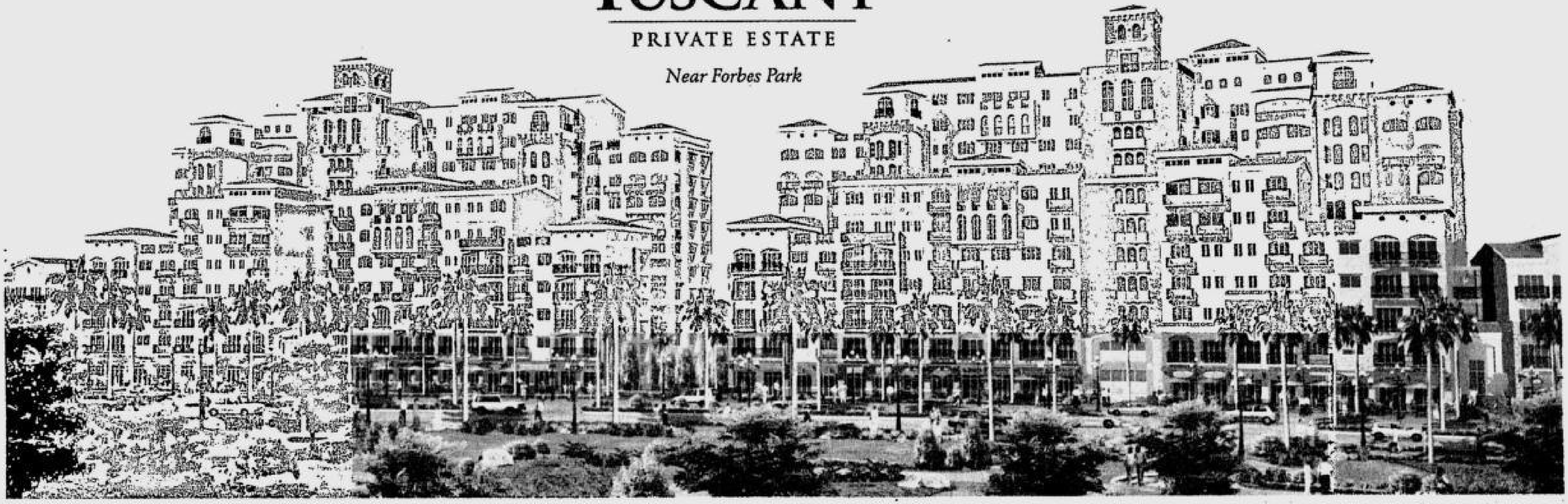

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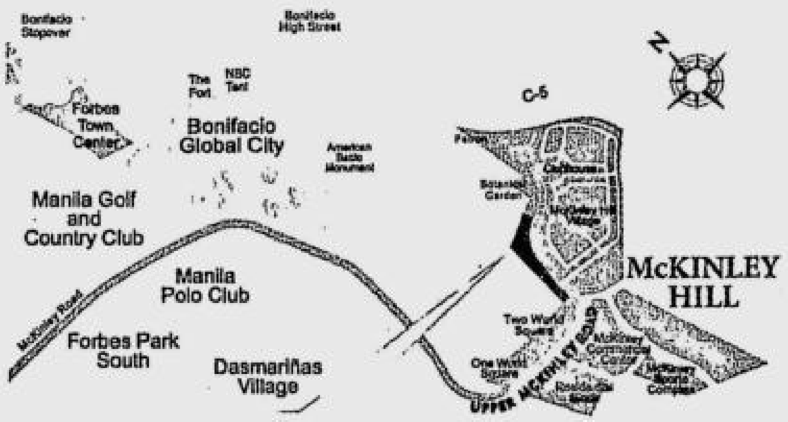

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LIFESTYLE
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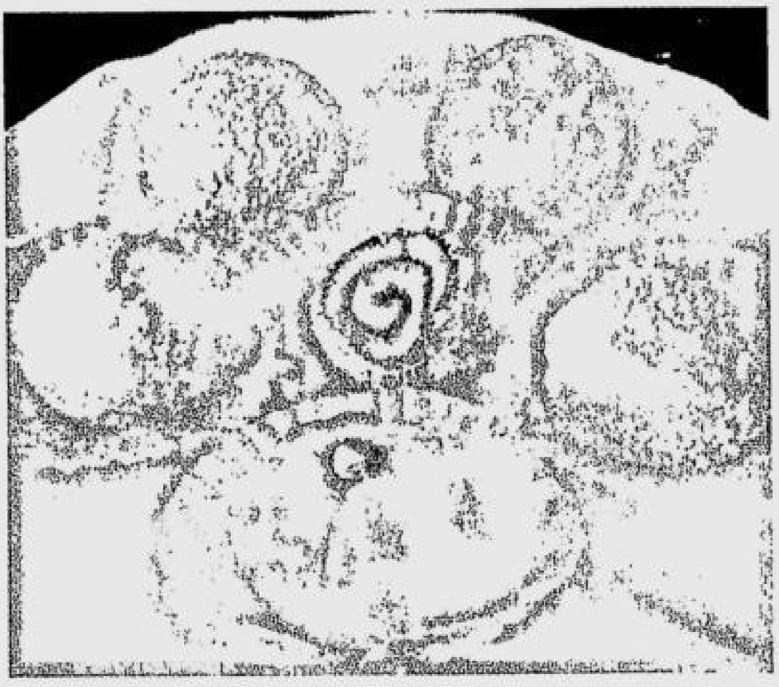
MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ◎ TUESDAY **FITNESS** ◎ WEDNESDAY **2BU** ◎ THURSDAY **FOOD** ◎ FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**



LITTLE sweets—Ube Roll at the center is super yummy!

My gauge of a good Chinese restaurant

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

WHERE TO DINE DURING the holidays, where to entertain friends, where to hold Christmas parties and the like are questions that have come my way. The word that keeps popping up in those questions is "affordable."

Last Saturday, after doing some Christmas shopping, I asked my sister Cristy to join mom, Diego and myself for Chinese food. Of course her next question was pretty obvious, where?

I told her where I wanted to dine and she said no! "It is so expensive there. I know of a place that I want you to try, that's good and so reasonable." We agreed to meet at Shanghai Bistro, Eastwood, at 12:45 p.m.

Picking a good Chinese restaurant is tricky. Silly as this may seem, my gauge of a good one is how well it cooks sweet and sour pork and/or lemon chicken! Rather simple fare but not often do you get them delightfully crunchy on the outside, yet deliciously tender, not dry, on the inside with a sauce that is balanced to a "T" for sweet and sour. Oh, and how well they do the fried rice, too.

If they cannot do this right, what can they do?

I have claimed time and again that I remain a fairly simple eater. Perfectly done comfort food appeals to me the most.

To my delight, I was immensely satisfied! We had lemon chicken, fried seafood noodle, salted fish fried rice and milkfish in a multitude of ways. I swear by the fried one with salt and pepper and served with sweet vinegar sauce, the steamed with minced garlic and, for the ultra health- and figure-conscious, *bangus* simmered in celery leaves!

I had to call on chef Wong Kam On, a Hong Kong native who describes his cooking as a mix of Cantonese and Shanghainese.

Aside from commending him, I had to ask why he opted to make *bangus* the star of his menu. He replied that his milkfish recipes were his tribute to the Filipino and the Philippines, a country he had called home for the past 14 years.

"Milkfish meat is very good and affordable. We de-bone [the fish] ourselves, instead of getting frozen ones, to guarantee freshness. Now more people can enjoy traditional Chinese recipes making use of their favorite fish at half the price."

Other things that turned out delightfully were the little sweets: *masachi, buchi,* snow ball. The *ube* roll with a custard filling was particularly exceptional—so soft it melts in your mouth, so tasty and astonishingly light!

And, if good food and value for money

MY GAUGE/ C3

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• 36 Times Street, West Triangle, Q.C. (374-2166/67, 0917-6352692)
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• Tea Republic, Pacific Star Bldg., Makati (846-0270 delivery available)
• 11 Garfield St., West Greenhills (584-2165, 0917-5337778 delivery available)
• Tea Republic, Level 3 Mezzanine, Enterprise Center, Ayala Ave. cor Paseo de Roxas, Makati (886-2298)
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Celebrate family ties and friendships with 8-course meal

Makati Shangri-La's Red's holiday menu is designed to give time for bonding and allow for extended 'chikahan'

CHILLED Duck Foie Gras, Seared Ahi Tuna, Lobster Terrine

By Linda B. Bolido

MAKE YOUR FAMILY REUNION OR GET-together with old friends a Red-letter day.

Savor your appetizer as you catch up on everyone's life and strengthen family bonds and friendships as you tuck into your Medallion of US Beef.

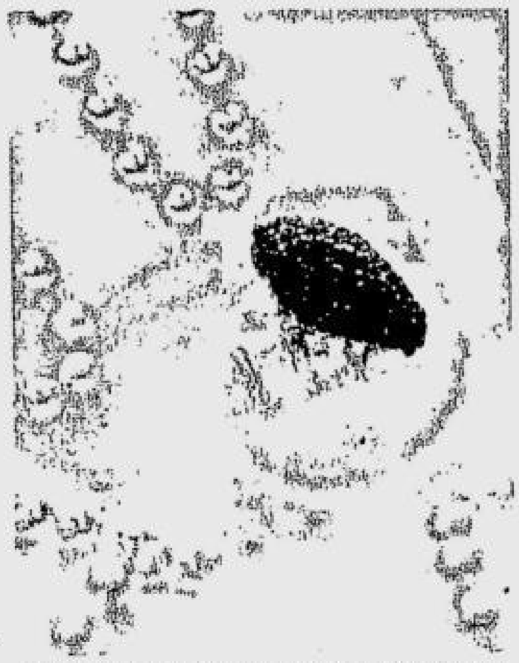
CHEF de cuisine Ruediger Lurz

Linger over coffee and dessert and reminisce about the good old days while making new pleasant memories.

Makati Shangri-La's chef de cuisine Ruediger Lurz has come up with an eight-course but light meal that will let people remain in their seats savoring the moments of togetherness without being filled to the gills.

The menu, available until Dec. 23, was especially designed for this season when family and friends reaffirm relationships and rekindle ties.

Lurz came up with the eight-course meal to let people spend as much time as they want with friends and loved ones.



GRILLED Diver Scallop in Cauliflower Puree with Osetra caviar

Servings are deliberately light and small so diners can focus on the joy of the moment instead of being concerned about how many calories they are getting.

One version of the leisurely meal starts with Amuse Bouche of Sesame-crusted Blue Fin Tuna with sweet soy reduction. It is followed by the Pan-fried Escalope of Foie Gras with forest mushroom ragout and truffle jus.

Next comes Grilled Diver Scallop with cauliflower puree and osetra caviar. The beef medallion is served with glazed carrots and soft polenta cake.

Dessert is Warm Chocolate Fondant with cinnamon ice cream and glazed cherries.

The gourmet menu is also available in six- or five-course meal.

For Christmas Eve, the centerpiece of the meal is crispy Chilean sea bass served with braised fennel and tomato confit and basil-lime sauce.

Grilled Medallion of US beef will be the main course in Red's Christmas dinner.

Another rendition of beef, this time lemongrass-crusted fillet with red onion marmalade, sweet soy and calamansi glaze, will be the centerpiece of the New Year's Eve meal.

New Year's lunch will be bannered by Pan Seared Loin of Rabbit with Rosemary served with mixed green salad and arugola pesto and Herb-crusted Lapu-Lapu fillet with roasted potatoes and lemon *beurre blanc*.

For dinner, it is going to be Mille Feuille of Grouper and Atlantic salmon with spinach and artichoke ragout in Pernod foam that will be at the center of the meal.

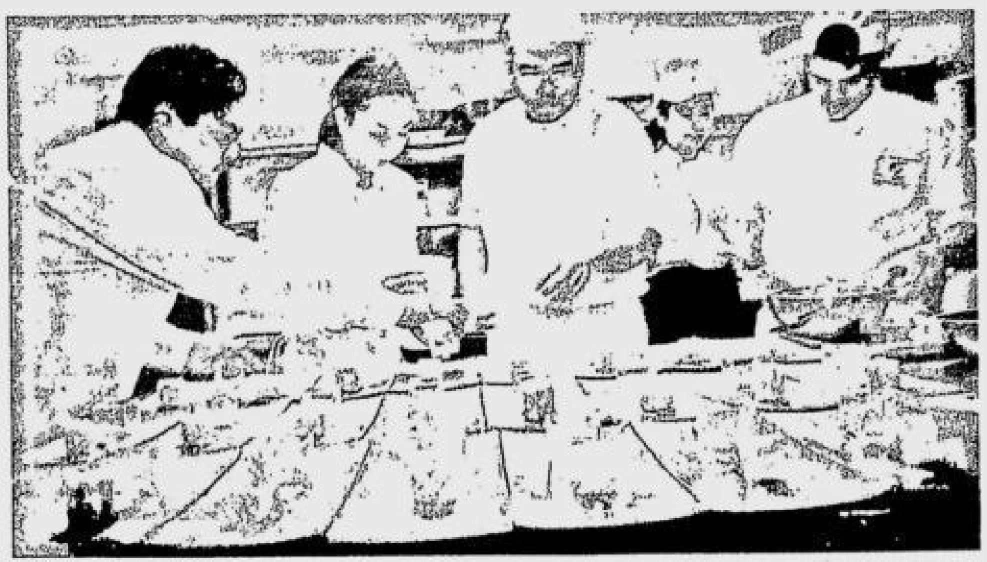
Traditional Christmas puddings will be available at Red until Dec. 25.

Red is at the main lobby level of Makati Shangri-La, tel nos. 840-0884 or 813-8888 ext. 7588/7599.

Shorter culinary course

THE GLOBAL CULINARY AND HOSPITALITY Academy will shorten the school's seven-month Diploma course in Culinary Arts into an intensive two-month program plus on-the-job training (OJT). This was announced by chef Rob Pengson, television celebrity chef and head of the school. Pengson says the program begins in February and will consist of daily six-hour classes composed of demonstration, lecture and laboratory work. Students will still be required to complete 480 hours of OJT to be able to graduate. Global Culinary and Hospitality Academy is at 2/F Amber Square, Escriva Drive, Ortigas Center, Pasig; 638-5949 or 638-6183; www.globalacademyph.com.

CHEF Rob Pengson



LEARNING THE ROPES: chefs Pengson and Sunshine Puey with their students

Have an eco-friendly . . .

From page C4

11. Choose reusable cloth napkins instead of single use paper napkins. Make cheap cloth napkins than you can wash and reuse from cheesecloth or flour bags.

12. Spend sensibly and avoid stress and debt from impulsive shopping.

13. Avoid impulse buying and limit shopping trips by car. Walk, cycle or take the jeepney, bus or train.

14. Say no to plastic bags! Bring a reusable carry bag, basket or *bayong*.

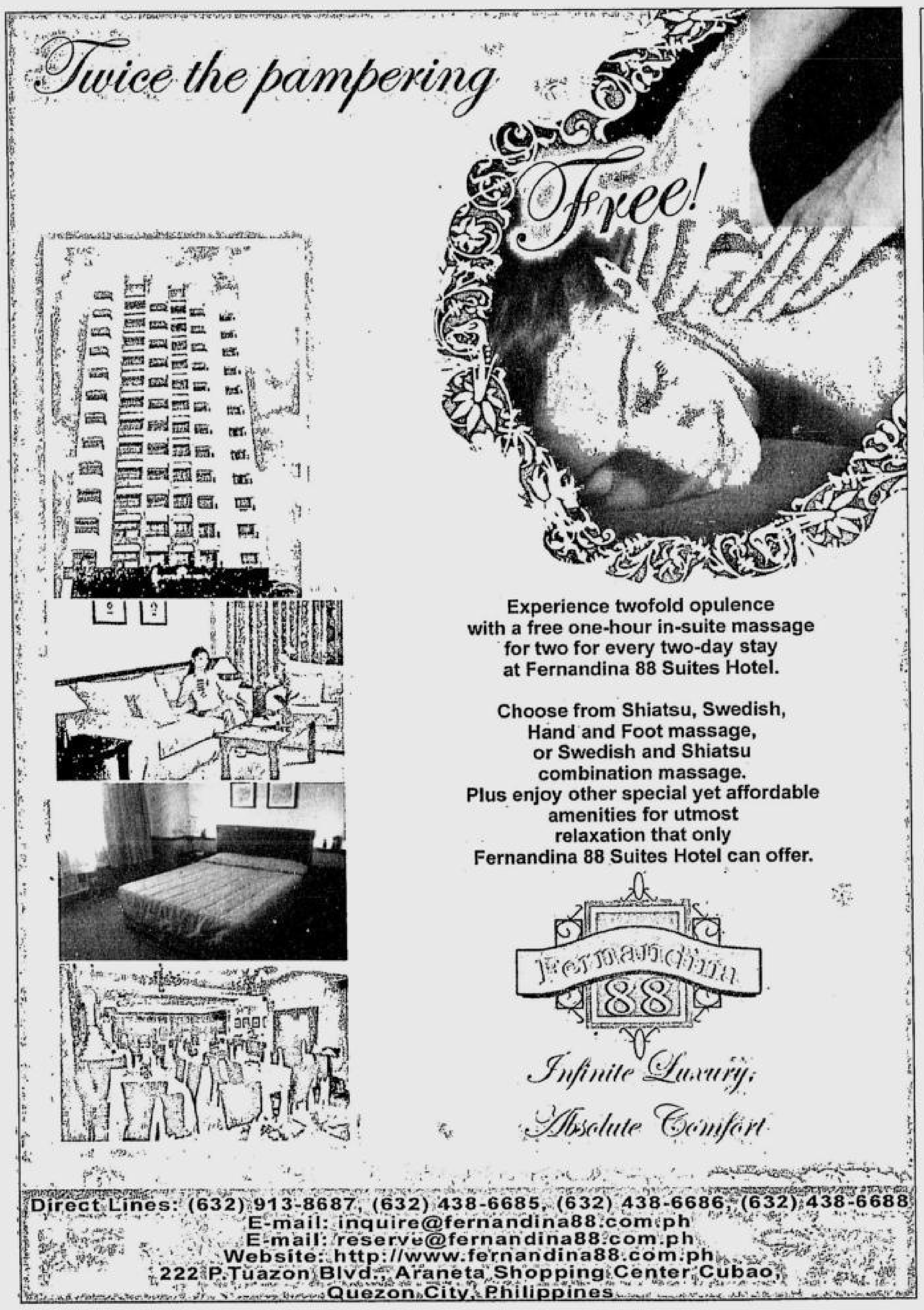
15. Avoid too much wrapping. Choose eco-friendly products!

16. Make your own gifts like plants from your own backyard, scrapbooks, or a CD music selection or products or delicacies from your province.

17. Choose gifts that do not need to be wrapped like potted plants, gift checks, etc.

18. If you need to wrap a gift, use old magazines or newspapers, old bandannas, etc.

19. Call or send e-cards. Create your own greeting card.



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DINING OUT

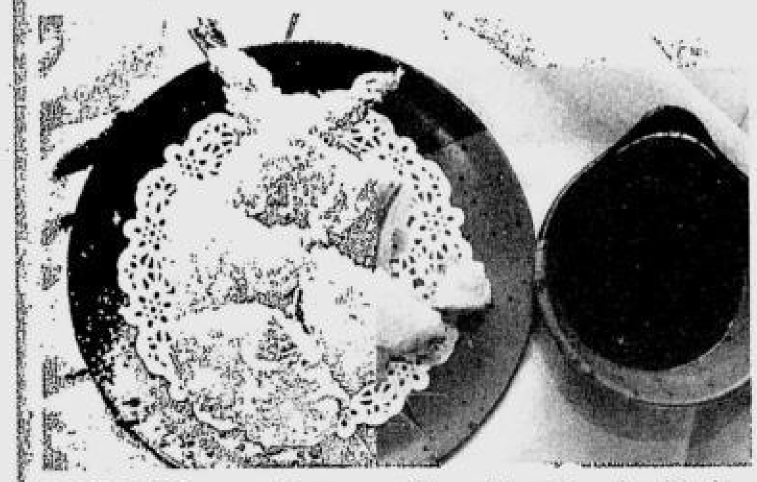
REFRESHING TEAS
Eastwood City's Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf offers a varied selection of rich aromatic teas served brewed or as lattes. Try the Moroccan Mint Latte, a refreshing infusion of peppermint-flavored green tea, rich chocolate and steamed nonfat milk. The light latte invokes images of Rabat and Tangiers. You can enjoy this with a slice of Chocolate Fudge cake for a special afternoon tea experience (6877278, text 0917-8EWCITY).

Delightful holiday offerings

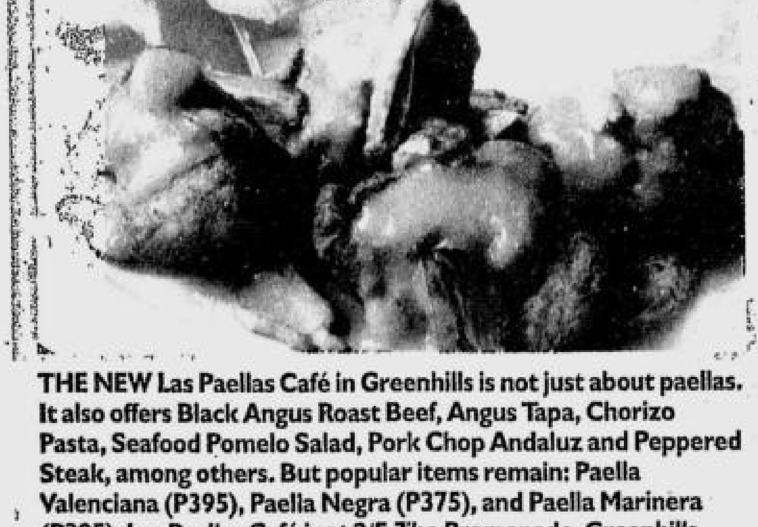
MARIO'S QUEZON CITY IS now serving special dishes for the holiday season. The star of Mario's holiday specials is Roast Turkey with its crispy skin, juicy meat, cranberries and gravy. Another specialty is Cochinillo, roast suckling piglet flavored with herbs and spices. Served alongside the Cochinillo is Mario's signature Spanish Paella. Also available are the tender Blade Steaks, which are US-certified Black Angus steaks served with merlot-mushroom sauce. Sweet Christmas from Mario's features Choco Choco Chip or Oatmeal Raisin Cookies in colorful keepsake tin cans; Amaretto or Curacao Butter Cakes in classic Christmas gift boxes; Toffee Sans Rival; and Deadly Walnut bars. Mario's is at Tomas Morato cor. Scout Gandia, QC (4153887 or 3720360). Mario's Baguio is on Session Road, tel. 074-4424241.

MEZZE BISTRO Bar serves *tapas* (from Spain), *petits plats* (from France) and *cichettis* (from Venice, Italy) with some dishes from Greece and Turkey. Southern European and Mediterranean dishes are carefully prepared and cooked with the freshest herbs, olive oils, balsamic vinegars, and freshest meats and seafood available. Along with this healthy fare, Mezze Bistro Bar offers an equally healthy way of dining, the small-plate servings. Mezze Bistro Bar features a whole new line of Southern European and Mediterranean food, diverse music genre for each day of the week, and a new smoking lounge, bar and private function room on the second floor (7288895).

THE NEW **BALI BLENDS** in Westgate, Filicity, tries to give customers the experience of being on the Indonesian "island of the gods." It offers a wide selection of Indonesian fusion dishes. The Sumatra Coffee is an after-meal must-have. Guitarist Basil Sta. Maria performs folk and classical music Wednesdays. The Caramel Park is featured Fridays. Lei Raymundo performs soul, rhythm and blues, pop jazz, and pop rock hits Saturdays. Set starts at 8 p.m. (7710917 or 8503516, westgate@filinvest.com).



SANBASHI Japanese Restaurant (Army-Navy Complex, Rizal Park, Manila, tel. 4006757) offers eat-all-you-can promo at P585 per person for dinner only. Guests can order tuna, salmon, tamago (omelet) and crabstick sashimi, a variety of sushi rolls including California and tekka maki, Mixed Tempura, Chicken Teriyaki, Bulgogi, Gomoku Udon and more. For health-conscious diners, there is the Tofu a la Pobre and the Cabbake Okaka Salad. Sanbashi is open Monday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (lunch) and 6-10 p.m. (dinner). It is open on Sundays for exclusive reservations.



THE NEW Las Paellas Café in Greenhills is not just about paellas. It also offers Black Angus Roast Beef, Angus Tapa, Chorizo Pasta, Seafood Pomelo Salad, Pork Chop Andaluz and Peppered Steak, among others. But popular items remain: Paella Valenciana (P395), Paella Negra (P375), and Paella Marinera (P395). Las Paellas Café is at 2/F, The Promenade, Greenhills, San Juan (7237485). Other branches are at Festival Supermall (8426919) and BF Commercial Parañaque (8079511).

My gauge of a good Chinese . . .

From page C1

are not enough, it has all these promotions. Every Friday and every 15th and 30th of the month, enjoy the buffet for P290. Though the offerings are not many, they are substantial and everything served is decent!

Executive Lunches that serve four are available at P1,350. And, for functions, they have lauriat sets to suit your budget. For reservations call, 6877103/6871861

Besides, Eastwood is the place to be for the whole family this season. Surrounding Shanghai Bistro are many beautifully hand-carved wooden Santas.

On weekends, choirs sing our most beloved Christmas carols, while a real live Santa roams freely with his elves. To add to the season's cheer, they have snow! It is *pang*-Kodak moment! I salute my dearest friend Kevin Tan for turning his dream into reality! For inquiries, call 6876770-74

On edible gifts

Making a comeback are our all-time favorite cakes:

- Rum and liquor cakes—Remember many moons ago when rum cake was the craze? The lady who started it all, Tita Sandy Romualdez, had left us but her legacy lives on. The recipe of the most delicious rum cake was handed down to her sister Jeangay Viray, who herself made innovations on the old favorite. She now has Limoncello, Orange & Chocolate Rum Cakes. All equally to die for, they come in beautiful boxes. Call 8260552.
- Tartitas—*Yema* filling sandwiched between layers of sponge cake. I recall devouring them when Blue Bacon and Green Eggs was still around. Baby Prado is making them again. Her *bibingka* is a must-try, if you have not tasted it yet! My dad loved them! For orders, call 0928-5048114.

CHEF Wong Kam On honors our *bangus* with his masterpieces. (Below) The Santa display at Eastwood

Mango Pudding, like gelatin and like what is served in Chinese restaurants, is my daughters' favorite. They want to bring it to their Christmas party in school. Can you please provide a recipe?
ELY

Sure I can! Merry Christmas!

1 tbsp unflavored gelatin
1 c cold water
1 c evaporated milk
¾ c sugar +/- depending on desired sweetness
1 c pureed sweet fresh mangoes
1 c chopped mangoes

- Combine gelatin, water and milk.
- Mix well and let sit for 10 minutes.
- Add the rest of the ingredients.
- Bring to boil, mixing until sugar and gelatin are completely dissolved.
- Pour into molds.
- Cool, refrigerate till set.
- Serve garnished with whipped cream, mango wedge and evaporated milk on the side.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

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THE CONSUMER

Have an eco-friendly Christmas

By Linda B. Bolido

JUST BECAUSE THIS IS THE season of indulgence does not mean we have to forget the "inconvenient truth" about how Mother Earth is suffering.

We can celebrate, we can be generous but let us also be kind to the planet where we live.

It is at times like this that we should keep reminding ourselves of the 3Rs—reduce, reuse, and recycle.

The Ecowaste Coalition (929-0376; ecowastecoalition@yahoo.com; http://ecowastecoalition.blogspot.com) and Bishop Deogracias S. Iñiquez, Jr., chair, permanent committee on public affairs of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, jointly called on Filipinos "to hew closer to the essence and simplicity of the first Christmas and, as real stewards of God's creation, lead the way in 'greening' the coming festivities."

Ecowaste bewailed what it called the "unbridled consumerism" of Christmas, making it "the most wasteful and most energy-consuming festivity in the Christian calendar."

Bishop Iñiquez said people should have more of the "inner radiance" the season brings "and less of the store-bought glitter and pomp that quickly fade away at the end of the season."

LJ Pasion, a youth campaigner of EcoWaste, called attention to the ecological and health costs of choices made during the holidays. "Any action we take to prevent waste and pollution … will go a long way in conserving our depleted resources and in curbing climate change."

The EcoWaste Coalition pointed out that over-the-top decorations, marketing gimmicks, shopping extravaganzas, and activities aggravated the country's environmental and health problems.

They used huge quantities of raw materials and energy, and generated all types of wastes and pollutants, including greenhouse gases that were causing a climate change.

Metro Manila's trash generation of about 8,000 cubic meters daily is expected to increase by one-third during the Christmas season due to greater consumption.

To help consumers make this an eco-friendly Christmas, the EcoWaste Coalition released a 25-point "Eco-Advisory on Greening and Simplifying Christmas." It includes:

1. Use recycled materials for your decor or recycle decorations.

3. Reuse old Christmas trees or use potted plants or trees, twigs or broomsticks.

4. If you have to buy holiday decorations, choose items that are locally made, non-toxic, reusable and require no electricity.

5. Create garlands made of recycled materials like old cards, gift wraps and ribbons instead of Christmas lights.

6. Choose safe, energy-efficient and long-lasting lights such as light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. Only use Christmas lights and electrical ornaments approved by the Bureau of Product Standards.

7. Use Christmas lights sparingly. Turn them off during daylight hours and switch them off when you are away or before going to bed.

8. Avoid lavish and wasteful parties.

9. Avoid throw-away utensils and plastic and Styrofoam containers. Go for reusables that can be washed and reused.

10. Manage party discards. Separate the biodegradable from the non-biodegradable and reuse or recycle the biodegradables. Give leftover food to pets or compost it to enhance the soil.

HAVE AN/ C2

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chicken Kamameshi Rice

reckimono
modern japanese

We cater for all your special events - christmas parties, birthdays, anniversaries, baptismals, corporate events etc.

Pinoys just love the 'finger lickin' goodness' of KFC meals

HUNDREDS have tried to replicate the recipe of Kentucky Fried Chicken, but have never even came close to the real KFC goodness, a taste that makes Filipinos enjoy KFC meals down to bits even licking their fingers to savor traces of that goodness.

Filipinos in general love a fried chicken meal. But what makes them go gaga for KFC Original Recipe chicken is the particular taste of the perfect blend of 11 secret herbs and spices specially formulated by KFC founder Colonel Harland Sanders. The perfect blend of herbs is the secret that makes KFC Original Recipe chicken a truly finger-lickin-good fried chicken you won't find anywhere else. Did you know that up to this day Sanders' secret recipe remains locked away in a vault in Louieville, Kentucky?

At KFC, making a fried chicken is a serious passion. Each piece of chicken is delivered fresh every day. Each piece is carefully marinated, breaded and cooked to golden brown perfection. KFC's Original Recipe chicken is cooked using a special pressure-frying process perfected by Colonel himself, which ensures that every KFC chicken is juicy, tender and finger lickin' good.

And it's not only the KFC chicken Filipinos love, but also the other dishes that go perfectly with it-like the KFC Original Recipe gravy and a variety of fixins like mashed potato, coleslaw and macaroni salad that truly complements and complete the whole experience of "finger lickin' goodness" of a KFC meal.

KFC, founded by Colonel in 1930, has grown to become one of the largest quick service food service systems in the world-with more than a billion "finger lickin' good" meals served annually in more than 80 countries and territories.

You are where Finger Lickin' Moments are made

Everyone here is having a KFC Finger Lickin' Moment

KFC Finger Lickin' Moments begin here

Enjoy your KFC Finger Lickin' Moment

When is your next KFC Finger Lickin' Moment?
KFC
Finger Lickin' Good

Double Your Luck!
"MARITES ALLEN'S FENG SHUI WAYS TO WIN-Part 2"
WORLD OF FENG SHUI
TRIVIA: 5 Which of the following animals joined efforts with the Monkey and the Rooster and placed eighth during the race?
ANS: a)The Snake b)The Dog c)The Sheep d)The Monkey
To join, SMART and GLOBE/SUN subscribers simply have to submit a one-time registration by keying in THESB REG <name/address/age/gender> (Ex. THESB REG Bona Sy/Gold St., Marikina City/27/F) and send it to 2951. To answer, Send THESB <letter> to 2951
Yesterday's answer: a) Fifth
[illegible] January 19, 2008
Marites Allen Philippines 2008 Feng Shui Extravaganza Updates
YEAR OF THE EARTH RAT
Watch out every FRIDAY at INQUIRER for the announcement of the weekly winners
WOFS HOTLINE • 914 7888 • 412 8888 • 0920 9509390
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LIFESTYLE

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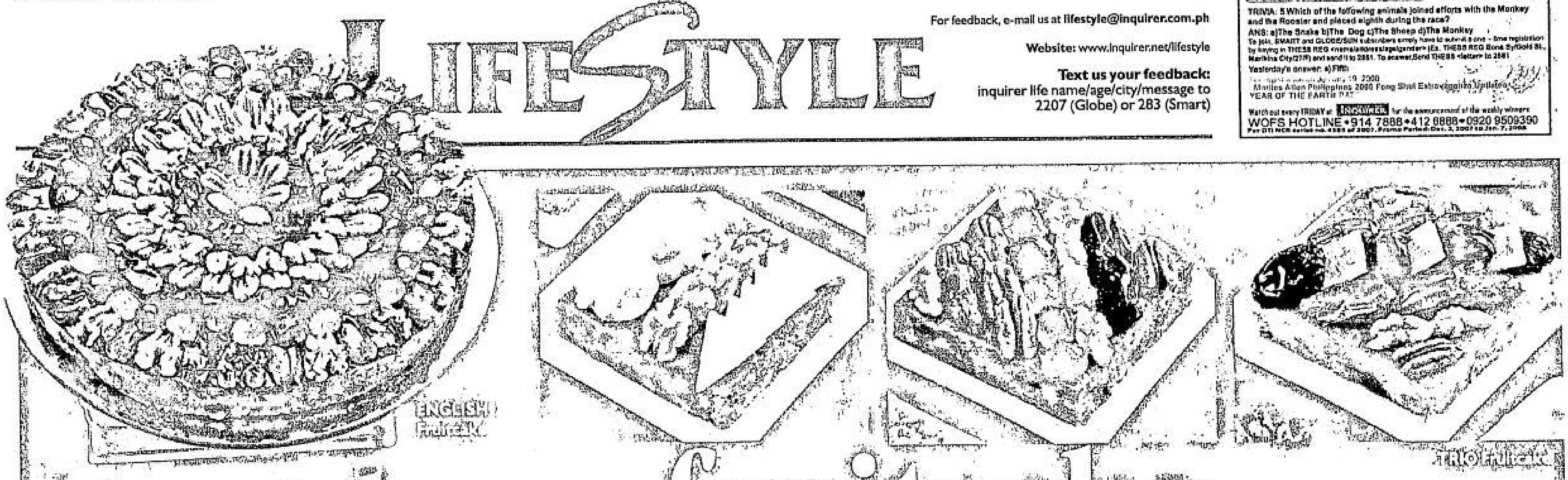


New take on fruitcake

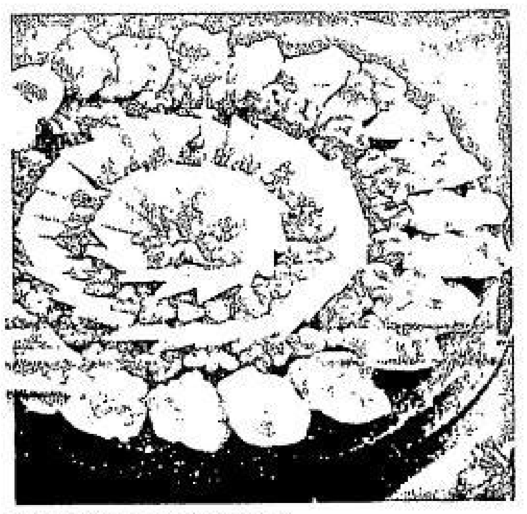
DELIFRANCE INTRODUCES TWO INNOVATIVE takes on the fruitcake that will make them welcome gifts this season.

William Tan Untiong, president of Delifrance Philippines says their dedicated team of pastry chefs made sure the fruitcakes are prepared with choice ingredients and served in an extra special way.

Delifrance's first offering is the Premium English Fruitcake. The rich baked item is filled with walnuts, pecans, prunes, dates, cherries and glazed fruits, soaked and cured for months in a special blend of brandy and fruit juices.

The White Chocolate Walnut Fruitcake is a luscious creation of glazed fruits and spices topped with milky layers of white chocolate and walnuts.

Delifrance has branches at Greenbelt 1, Rustans, Glorietta, The Podium, Greenhills Theater Mall, Alabang Town Center, Festival Supermall, Robinsons Place Manila and SM Hypermart Branches (6420021).



WHITE Chocolate Grand

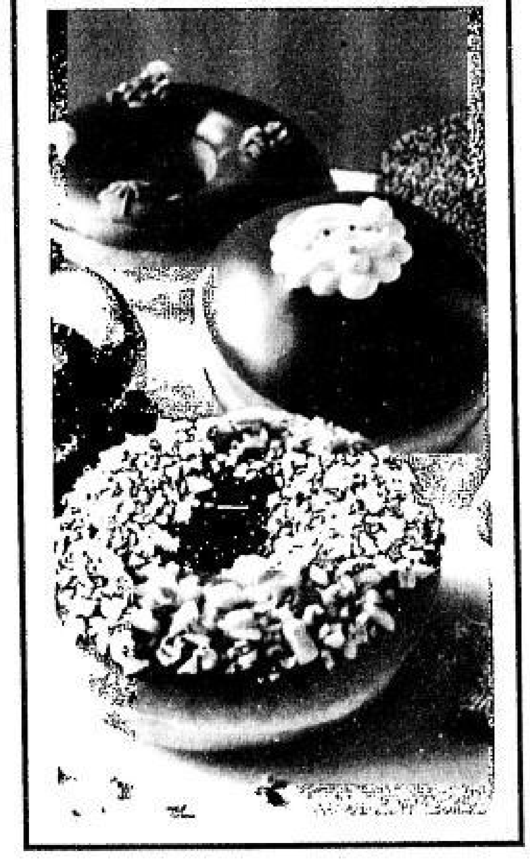
Sweet Christmas

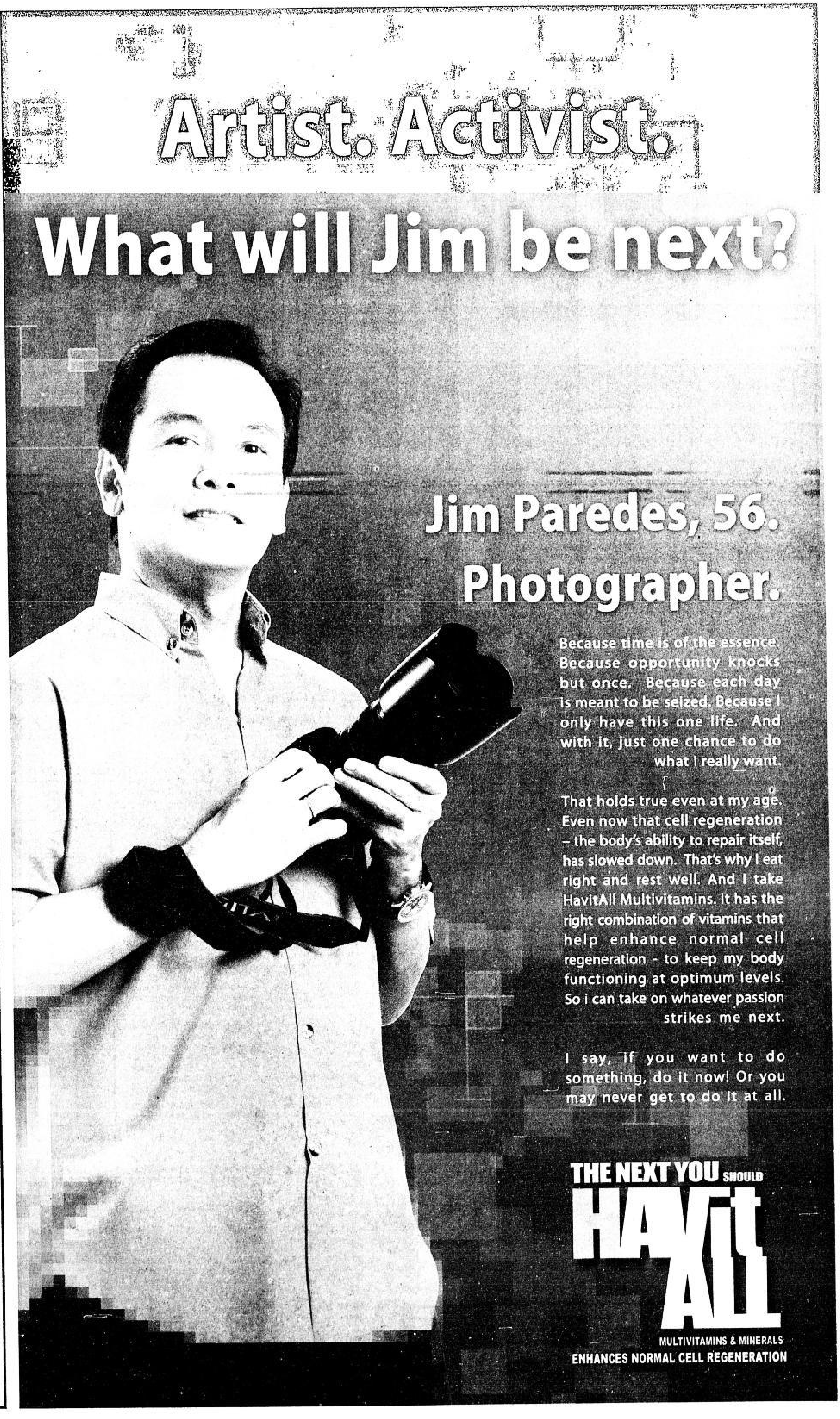
IT'S GOING TO BE A SWEET, sweet Christmas as Krispy Kreme gets everyone in the yuletide spirit with its lineup of holiday doughnuts.

Sink your teeth into Hershey's Candy Cane Kisses, little pieces of crunchy candy mixed in peppermint-flavored white chocolate with red stripes, topped on a Krispy Kreme chocolate iced doughnut.

Also available are other Krispy Kreme holiday doughnut flavors like Santa's Chocolate Iced, Holiday Vanilla Iced, Holiday Chocolate Iced, Star-shaped Vanilla Iced with sprinkles, and Star-shaped Chocolate Iced with sprinkles.

Krispy Kreme Holiday Doughnuts are available at all Krispy Kreme stores at Bonifacio High Street in The Fort, Taguig; Upper Ground Floor, Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Greenhills Shopping Center (the first drive-through store in Asia), 4/L TriNoma in North Edsa, and at G/F, SM Mall of Asia main mall, Pasay City.





Artist. Activist.

What will Jim be next?

Jim Paredes, 56.
Photographer.

Because time is of the essence. Because opportunity knocks but once. Because each day is meant to be seized. Because I only have this one life. And with it, just one chance to do what I really want.

That holds true even at my age. Even now that cell regeneration – the body's ability to repair itself, has slowed down. That's why I eat right and rest well. And I take HavitAll Multivitamins. It has the right combination of vitamins that help enhance normal cell regeneration - to keep my body functioning at optimum levels. So i can take on whatever passion strikes me next.

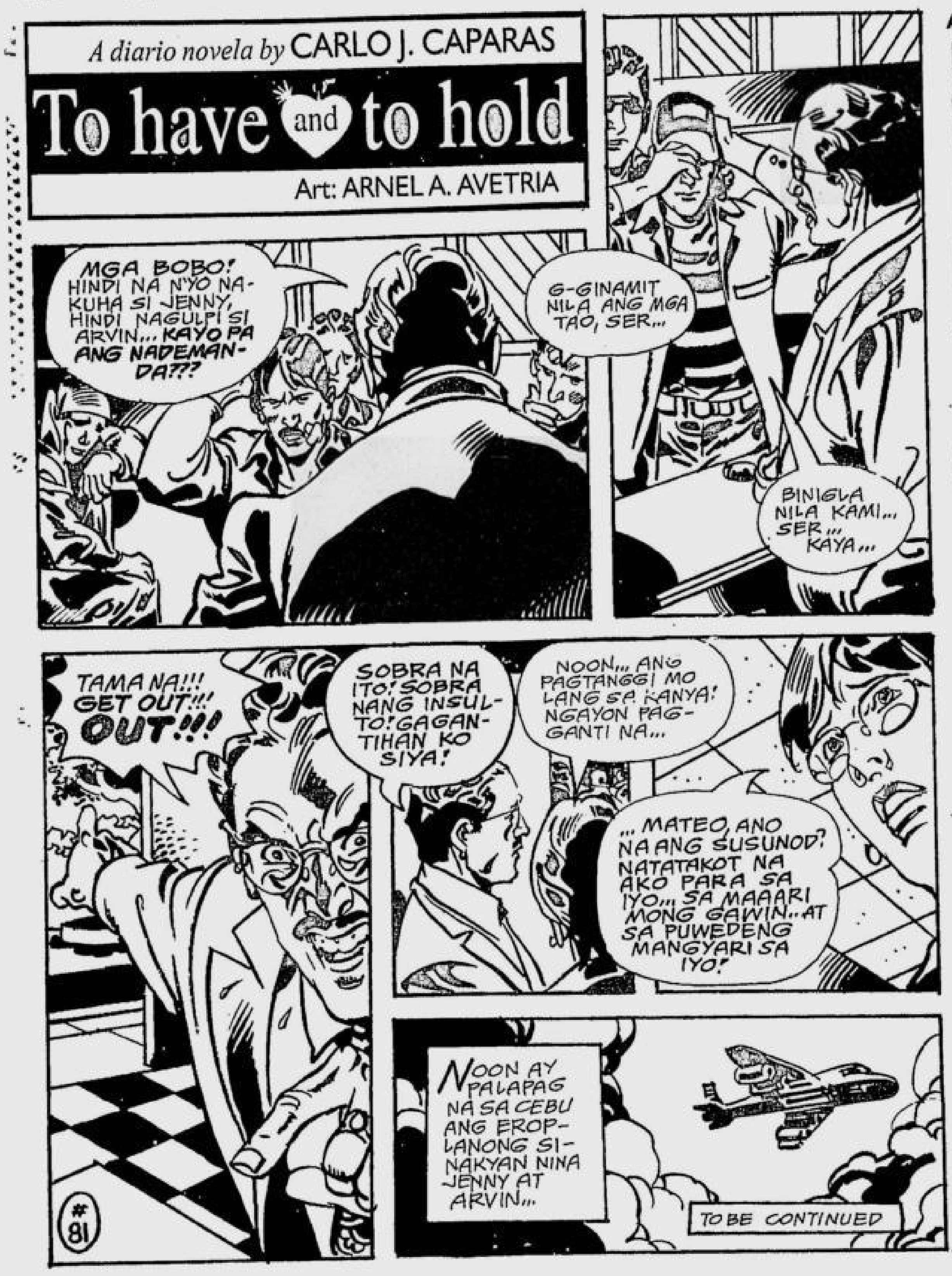
I say, if you want to do something, do it now! Or you may never get to do it at all.

THE NEXT YOU SHOULD
HAVit ALL
MULTIVITAMINS & MINERALS
ENHANCES NORMAL CELL REGENERATION

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

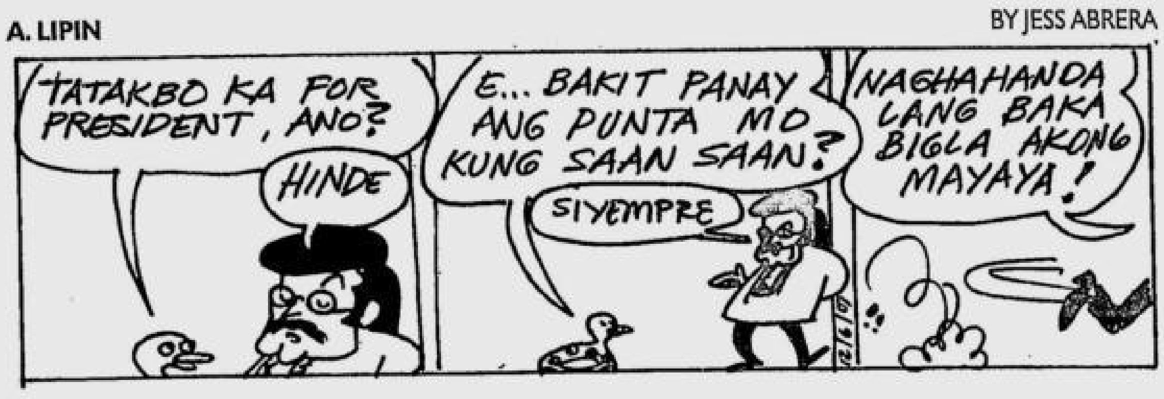
To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


MGA BOBO! HINDI NA N'YO NA-KUHA SI JENNY, HINDI NAGULPI SI ARVIN... KAYO PA ANG NADEMAN-DA???
G-GINAMIT NILA ANG MGA TAO, SER...
BINIGLA NILA KAMI... SER... KAYA...
TAMA NA!!! GET OUT!!! OUT!!!
SOBRA NA ITO! SOBRA NANG INSUL-TO! GAGAN-TIHAN KO SIYA!
NOON... ANG PAGTANGGI MO LANG SA KANYA! NGAYON PAG-GANTI NA...
...MATEO, ANO NA ANG SUSUNOD? NATATAKOT NA AKO PARA SA IYO... SA MAAARI MONG GAWIN.. AT SA PUWEDENG MANGYARI SA IYO!
NOON AY PALAPAG NA SA CEBU ANG EROP-LANONG SI-NAKYAN NINA JENNY AT ARVIN...
TO BE CONTINUED
#81

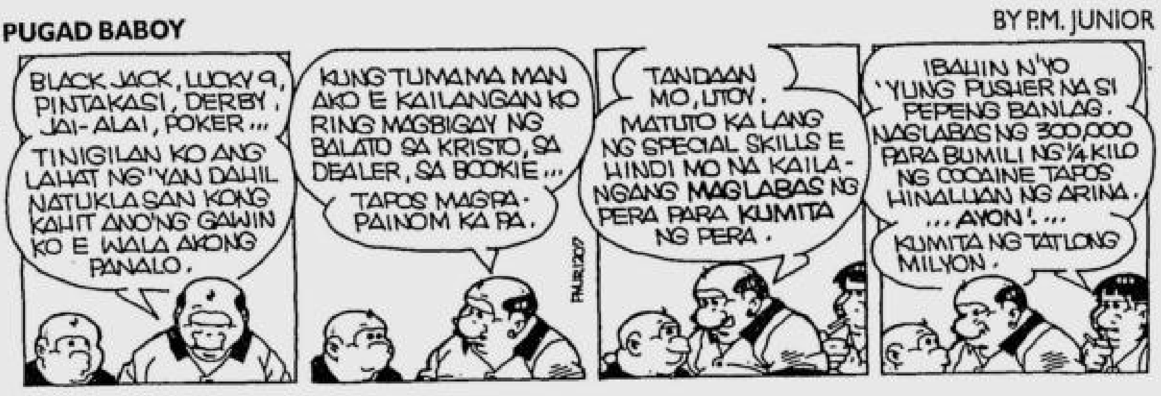
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


TATAKBO KA FOR PRESIDENT, ANO?
HINDE
E... BAKIT PANAY ANG PUNTA MO KUNG SAAN SAAN?
SIYEMPRE
NAGHAHANDA LANG BAKA BIGLA AKONG MAYAYA!
12/6/07

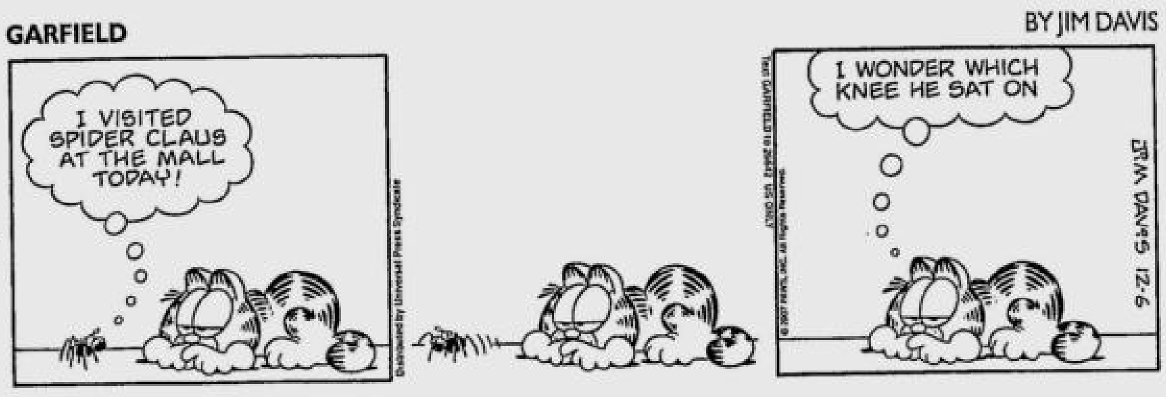
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BLACK JACK, LUCKY 9, PINTAKASI, DERBY, JAI-ALAI, POKER...
TINIGILAN KO ANG LAHAT NG 'YAN DAHIL NATUKLASAN KONG KAHIT ANO'NG GAWIN KO E WALA AKONG PANALO.
KUNG TUMAMA MAN AKO E KAILANGAN KO RING MAGBIGAY NG BALATO SA KRISTO, SA DEALER, SA BOOKIE...
TAPOS MAGPA-PAINOM KA PA.
TANDAAN MO, UTOY.
MATUTO KA LANG NG SPECIAL SKILLS E HINDI MO NA KAILA-NGANG MAGLABAS NG PERA PARA KUMITA NG PERA.
IBAHIN N'YO 'YUNG PUSHER NA SI PEPENG BANLAG.
NAGLABAS NG 300,000 PARA BUMILI NG ¼ KILO NG COCAINE TAPOS HINALUAN NG ARINA.
...AYON!...
KUMITA NG TATLONG MILYON.

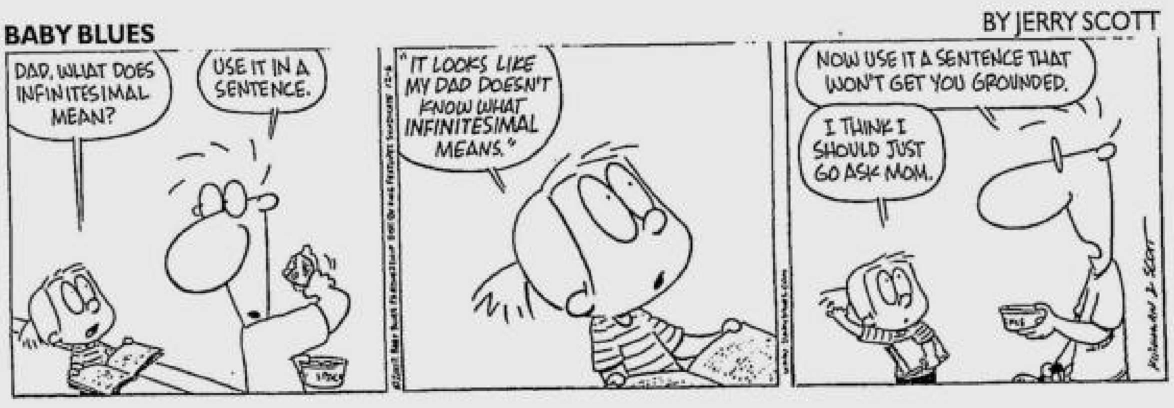
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


I VISITED SPIDER CLAUS AT THE MALL TODAY!
I WONDER WHICH KNEE HE SAT ON
JIM DAVIS 12-6

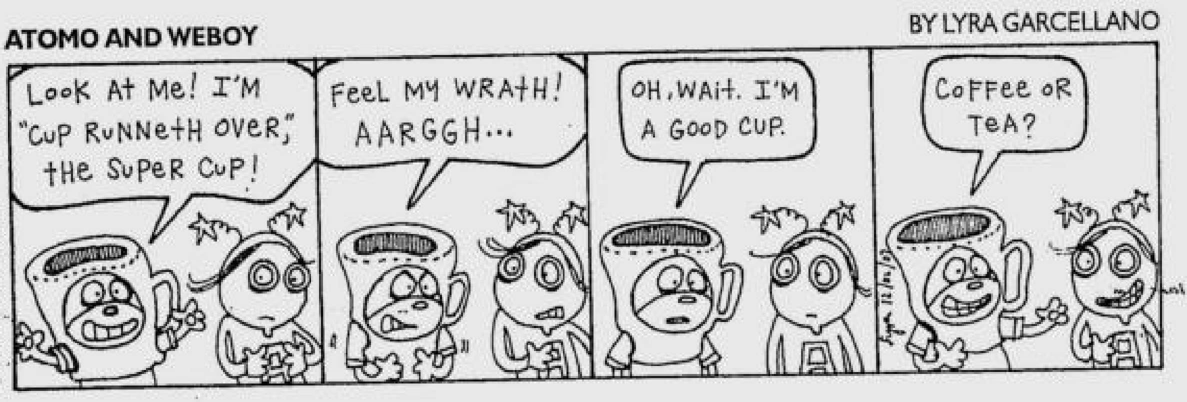
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DAD, WHAT DOES INFINITESIMAL MEAN?
USE IT IN A SENTENCE.
"IT LOOKS LIKE MY DAD DOESN'T KNOW WHAT INFINITESIMAL MEANS."
NOW USE IT A SENTENCE THAT WON'T GET YOU GROUNDED.
I THINK I SHOULD JUST GO ASK MOM.

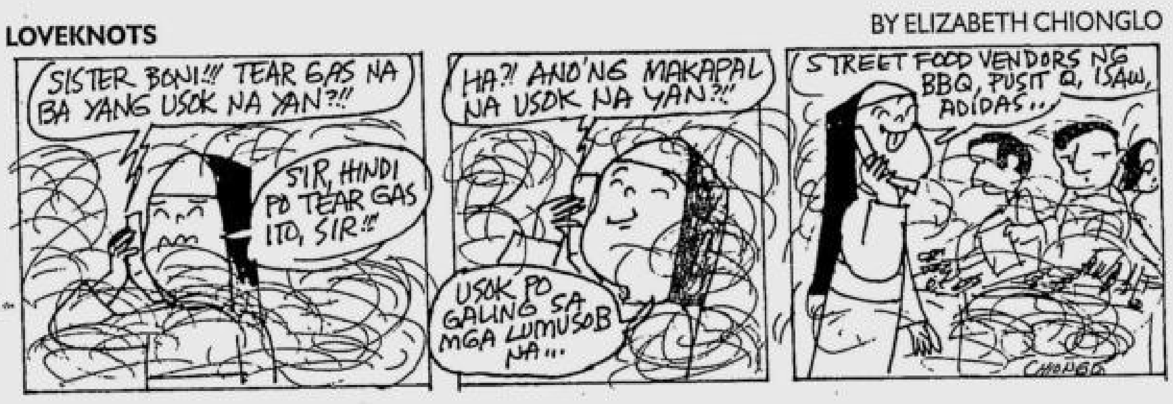
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Look At Me! I'M "CUP RUNNETH OVER," the Super Cup!
Feel MY WRATH! AARGGH...
OH, WAIT. I'M A GOOD CUP.
Coffee or Tea?

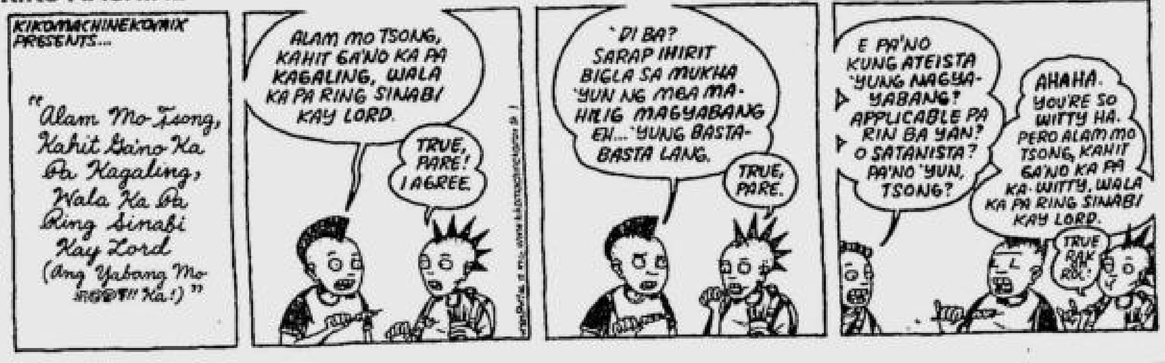
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI!!! TEAR GAS NA BA YANG USOK NA YAN?!!
SIR, HINDI PO TEAR GAS ITO, SIR!!
HA?! ANO'NG MAKAPAL NA USOK NA YAN?!!
USOK PO GALING SA MGA LUMUSOB NA...
STREET FOOD VENDORS NG BBQ, PUSIT Q, ISAW, ADIDAS...
CHIONGLO

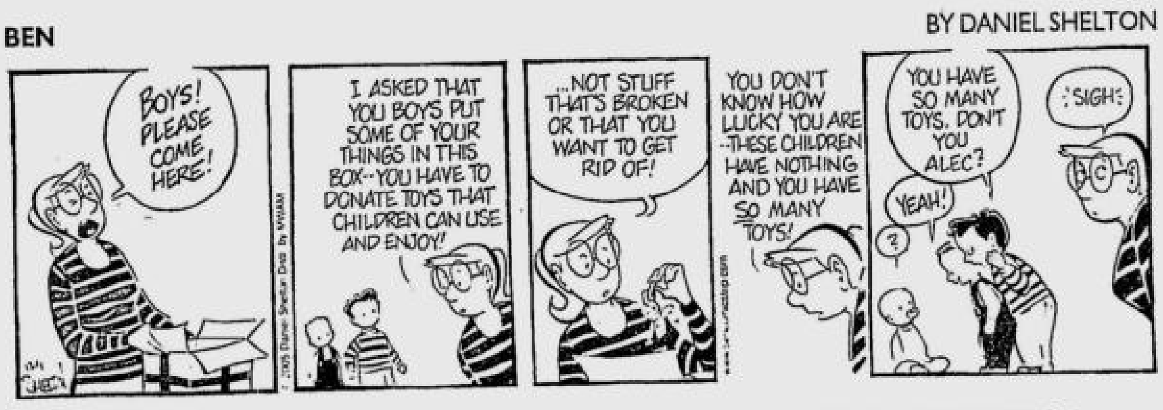
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KIKOMACHINEKOMIX PRESENTS...
"Alam Mo Tsong, Kahit Gaano Ka Pa Kagaling, Wala Ka Pa Ring Sinabi Kay Lord (Ang Yabang Mo [illegible]!!! Ka!)"
ALAM MO TSONG, KAHIT GA'NO KA PA KAGALING, WALA KA PA RING SINABI KAY LORD.
TRUE, PARE! I AGREE.
'DI BA? SARAP IHIRIT BIGLA SA MUKHA 'YUN NG MGA MA-HILIG MAGYABANG EH... 'YUNG BASTA-BASTA LANG.
TRUE, PARE.
E PA'NO KUNG ATEISTA 'YUNG NAGYA-YABANG? APPLICABLE PA RIN BA YAN? O SATANISTA? PA'NO 'YUN, TSONG?
AHAHA. YOU'RE SO WITTY HA. PERO ALAM MO TSONG, KAHIT GA'NO KA PA KA-WITTY, WALA KA PA RING SINABI KAY LORD.
TRUE RAK RAK.

BEN

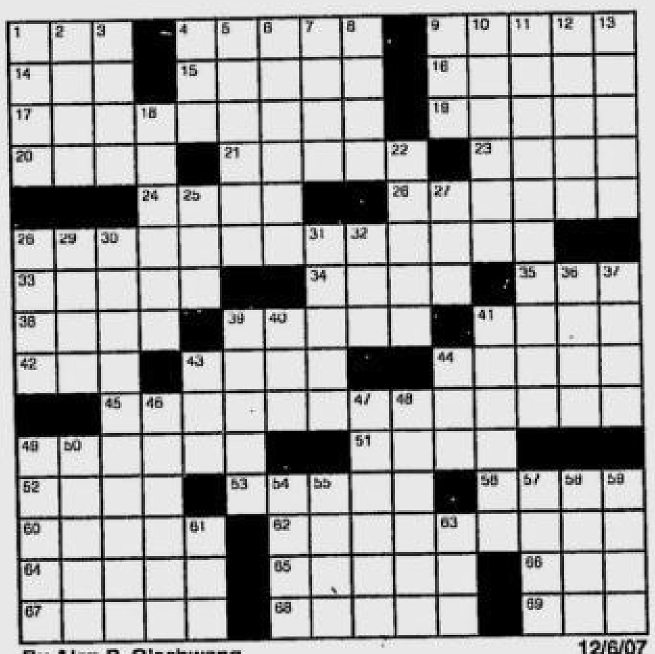
BY DANIEL SHELTON


BOYS! PLEASE COME HERE!
I ASKED THAT YOU BOYS PUT SOME OF YOUR THINGS IN THIS BOX--YOU HAVE TO DONATE TOYS THAT CHILDREN CAN USE AND ENJOY!
...NOT STUFF THAT'S BROKEN OR THAT YOU WANT TO GET RID OF!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LUCKY YOU ARE --THESE CHILDREN HAVE NOTHING AND YOU HAVE SO MANY TOYS!
YOU HAVE SO MANY TOYS. DON'T YOU ALEC?
YEAH!
?
SIGH

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Neon or argon
4 Farm units
9 Jargon
14 City in GA
15 Hunt illegally
16 Wilkes-__, PA
17 Start of a quip
19 Blockade
20 Madame Bovary
21 Locates
23 Musial or Getz
24 March Madness org.
26 Most people?
28 Part 2 of quip
33 Hersey's bell town
34 Took on in court
35 On the mark
38 Wire measures
39 Garbles
41 U.S. leader
42 Speller's contest
43 Switchboard pers.
44 Native-born Israeli
45 Part 3 of quip
49 Curd product
51 Allot
52 Bank offering
53 Refuse piles
56 Italian noble family
60 Way from a man's heart
62 End of quip
64 Shave off
65 Father of an aristo
66 Business letter abbr.
67 Break down, as a sentence
68 Cubic meter
69 Lah-di-__

DOWN
1 Motown Marvin
2 Tiny particle
3 Urban blight
4 Group of shrinks
5 Casual talk, casually
6 Type of tire
7 Coll. course
8 Roe-producing fish
9 6-pack muscles?
10 Dried grape
11 "Mata Hari" star
12 Church instrument
13 Second decade
18 Church laws
22 Vaults
25 Corp. money man
27 Vicious or Caesar
28 Ewe's offspring
29 Garfield's pal
30 Gossip
31 Overthrow
32 Hair of the dog
36 Lima's land
37 Romanov title
39 Velocity
40 Jamie __ Curtis
41 Check recipients
43 Gives the go-ahead
44 One NCO
46 Meddlesome women
47 Attribute to a cause
48 Homesteader
49 Hold tight
50 Disturbance
54 Refs' cohorts
55 Castle protector
57 Molt
58 Albacore in a can
59 Engrave
61 Live and breathe
63 Otto I's realm



12/6/07

By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

A	D	A	P	T	■	O	B	E	■	S	O	B	E	R
L	O	N	E	R	■	N	E	A	■	A	D	A	N	O
E	D	I	N	A	■	L	A	G	■	L	O	R	A	N
C	O	L	D	S	H	O	U	L	D	E	R	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	H	O	O	■	E	N	S	■	F	A	T
S	E	C	■	Y	A	K	S	■	A	R	C	A	N	E
A	T	R	A	■	G	E	T	S	■	E	A	T	I	N
C	H	I	L	L	Y	R	E	C	E	P	T	I	O	N
R	A	N	G	E	■	S	A	H	L	■	O	M	N	I
E	N	G	A	G	E	■	M	E	L	D	■	A	S	S
D	E	E	■	H	M	O	■	D	I	E	T	■	■	■
■	■	■	C	O	O	L	C	U	S	T	O	M	E	R
R	E	C	U	R	■	L	I	L	■	E	N	O	L	A
A	L	I	E	N	■	A	T	E	■	R	I	V	A	L
G	L	A	S	S	■	S	Y	D	■	S	C	E	N	E

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12/5/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're an optimist! You see potential where others see nothing. You're flexible and pragmatic, and you're a survivor. Because you have such a positive state of mind, you quickly see how to salvage the best from any situation. You create your own opportunities. The year ahead is the beginning of a new cycle for you. Go forth and open any door.

Birthdate of: Satoru Iwata, Nintendo CEO; Jose Contreras, baseball pitcher; Dave Brubeck, pianist/composer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're concerned with shared property, bills, debt, taxes, insurance matters or inheritances today. Work by yourself if you can. Others are not particularly cooperative. (Things will improve here very soon.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a poor day for serious discussions with partners and friends. People are too quick to criticize! (This is no fun.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Don't be critical of co-workers today. And don't let anyone ride roughshod over you. Pessimism is rampant today. People are too quick to make judgments.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be gentle and forgiving with children today. You might feel that you have a burden to bear. Romantic situations might be difficult because partners are critical of each other. Bummer!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Home repairs or tasks that are left undone are discouraging today. It makes you feel world-weary and self-critical. Don't worry, this feeling will pass quickly.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): It's easy to be worried about things today. Remember the old saying: "Worry is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do, but gets you nowhere."

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Financial matters might be discouraging today. (Why is there always so much month left at the end of the money?) Don't worry, as these worries will pass quickly.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The best way to handle today is to tackle some heavy mental work. Your critical faculties are sharp, although communication with others won't be easy.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Work alone today or behind the scenes. Your ability to do research and to slog through routine work is excellent. You can get a lot done.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Try not to focus on the faults of your friends or groups today. (Because that's where your mind wants to go!) Someone older might criticize you today. Just let it go.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Relations with bosses and authority figures are bit of a drag today. People want to know how you're going to do things. They seem to be demanding. Things will soon turn in your favor.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Travel plans or anything related to education could be discouraging today. Don't worry; these obstacles could be temporary. Venus will promote opportunities in these areas for the entire month. Relax.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu By Dave Green

	6			8			3	
	2	4				9	5	
				5				
4								8
	3		1		8		9	
9								7
				7				
	7	2				1	6	
	1			9			2	

Difficulty Level ★★★
12/06

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

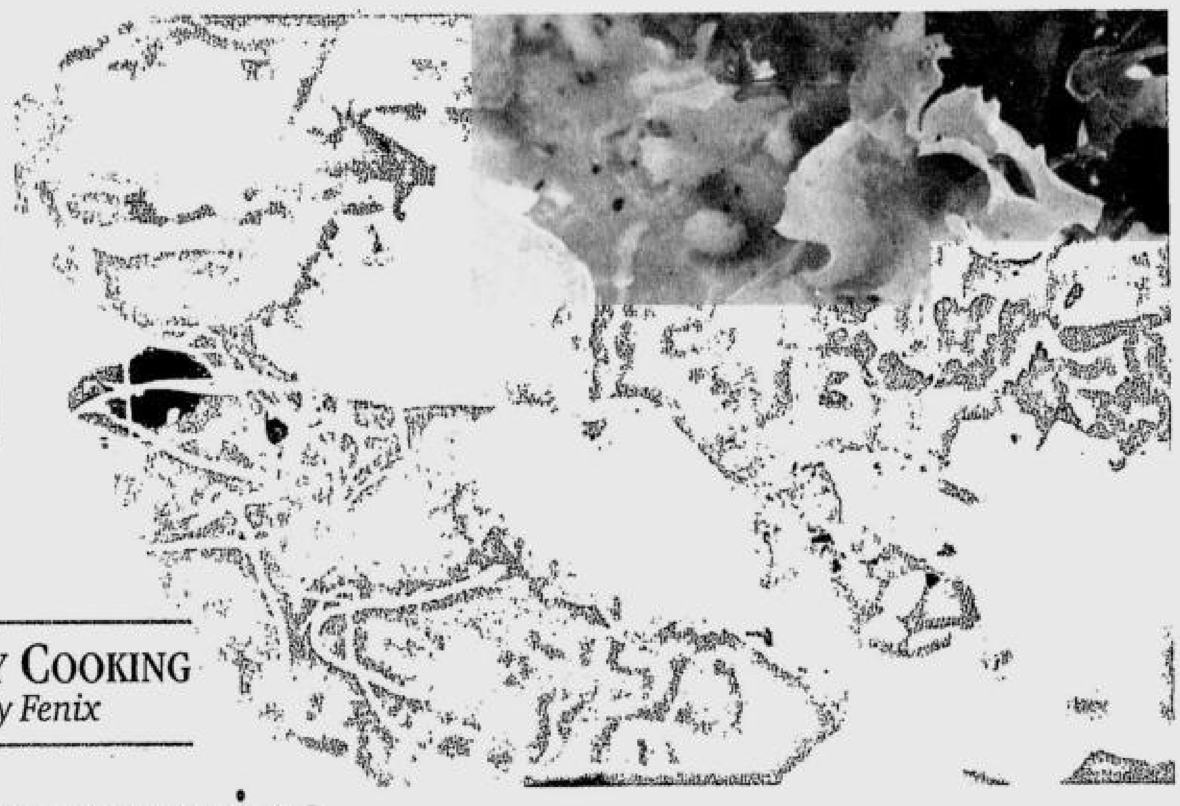
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	3	6	4	8	2	9	5	7
8	7	4	3	5	9	1	2	6
9	5	2	7	6	1	8	4	3
4	2	9	1	3	7	6	8	5
3	8	5	9	4	6	2	7	1
7	6	1	8	2	5	3	9	4
5	9	8	6	1	4	7	3	2
2	1	7	5	9	3	4	6	8
6	4	3	2	7	8	5	1	9

Difficulty Level ★★★
12/05

OUR seaside dinner included *ipon* with *gamet*, *curacha* and a seaweed salad.



US BEEF Carpaccio with roasted Barley & White Alba Truffle

SHEETS of *gamet* and curly *kulot*

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

Prized, expensive and delicious

IF THE FRENCH AND ITALIANS have their truffles, the Ilocanos have their *gamet*.

Both are prized products, difficult to gather and have a short harvest season. Truffles are expensive mushrooms and *gamet* are expensive seaweeds.

Gamet is gathered by the Ilocos Norte sea where the rocks are constantly battered by high waves. Truffles grow in secret locations in France and Italy and gatherers are helped by dogs or pigs trained to sniff mushroom locations.

September to November is the best time to gather both. It has to be autumn for the truffles and cool, windy days for *gamet*.

A kilo of either not only costs an arm and a leg but probably a whole body. A sheet of *gamet*, the size of short bond paper, costs P600. White truffles cost P500,000 a kilo.

Why I thought of writing about the two together was because I had the opportunity to taste both recently.

Fine dining

For the truffles, it seemed appropriate for this white fungi from Alba in the Piemonte region of Italy to be taken in fine-dining style at Spiral of Sofitel Philippine Plaza. Muted lights and Italian wines helped set the mood of eager anticipation.

We had champagne to begin the lunch followed by a full-bodied white, Torricella de Toscana IGT, Chardonnay 2003, and a bright red Brolio Barone Ricasoli 2003.

Gamet, on the other hand, was tasted near where it is gathered, in the town of Burgos, Ilocos Norte. I was shown the rocks at the back of a beach house by our hosts, Mayor Cris Garcia and his father Rudy, who was also the former mayor of the town.

On the Burgos table were other kinds of seaweed but, among them, *gamet* was still considered the "black gold." And it was waiting to be cooked by the old women who knew best.

Risky job

Gathering *gamet* is a dangerous job. To emphasize just how risky it was, we were told the story of a couple who were swept away by the waves a month before.

For the truffles, the danger is probably when the pig or dog cannot be stopped from eating the "white gold" they are supposed to locate.

Back at Spiral, the first truffle course was the *carpaccio*. We strained to locate the shaved white truffles hidden somewhere near or underneath the thinly sliced Parmesan cheese. It was the same with the main course of venison served with potato finger gnocchi.

With half or a gram of the truffle in every order, the pieces can be almost invisible. You just have to let your nose confirm that the truffles are there.

The aroma of truffles is difficult to describe. It is like opening an old wardrobe without the pungent smell of oldness.

The aroma is enhanced when the truffle is infused in oil. That is why when the soup, risotto and dessert were brought in, we did not have to ask where the truffle pieces were. The risotto raised its value as it was served with pieces of gold leaf as well.

And the dessert of brûlée was made from Maracaibo chocolates, famous cocoa from Venezuela.

Sofitel's executive chef Christian Werdenberg said the White Alba Truffle festival will stay only until the truffle supply lasts. Because of the hefty price, supply is really limited. But he does tempt with other menu items such as asparagus and crayfish ravioli, roasted duck breast and barramundi fillet with crayfish cooked "en papillote" or steamed in paper. (Sofitel reservations: 8326988).

Back to Burgos town by the waters where the *gamet* was gathered, we were served the black seaweed sheets grilled for a few moments. They were deliciously crisp. We were told that *gamet* was the same as the Japanese nori but Ilocos did not have the technology to produce really thin sheets.

I did remember my wasted money years ago when, on a trip to Laoag, I bought a small sheet of *gamet* for P200. It languished in a container in the kitchen waiting to be used but I did not really know how.

I had to throw it away after it began to smell like rancid fish. I think it smelled that way from the beginning but I was too excited to notice because of its price.

In Burgos, *gamet* must have been freshly dried so it just smelled slightly of the sea.

Expensive omelet

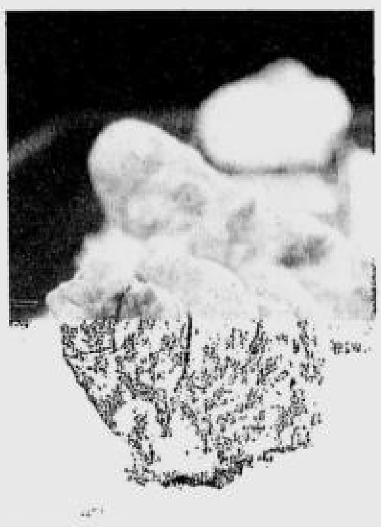
Just like black truffles, *gamet* is cut in strips and then mixed with eggs to make omelet. At the table of the mayor, *gamet* was cooked together with *ipon* (larval goby, also called *hipon* in Northern Mindanao). The *ipon* looked like but is different from *dulong* (Lacustrine goby) and is way more expensive.

We had an iodine-rich dinner that included other seaweeds like curly *kulot* and the branch-like *salingup*. Those were grilled in banana leaves as well.

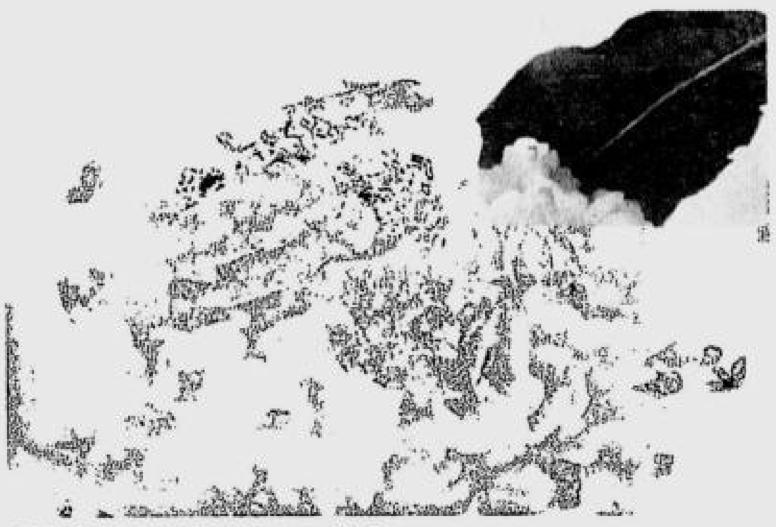
We also had *curacha*, a crab that we mistakenly thought existed only south of the country, in Zamboanga. But there they were, up north in Ilocos Norte, the fresh meat embedded in a labyrinth of crevices.

Looking at how much *gamet* and ipon we were served, I thought that dinner must have been so expensive. But our hosts spared no expense to share their pride in a product they love and are proud of.

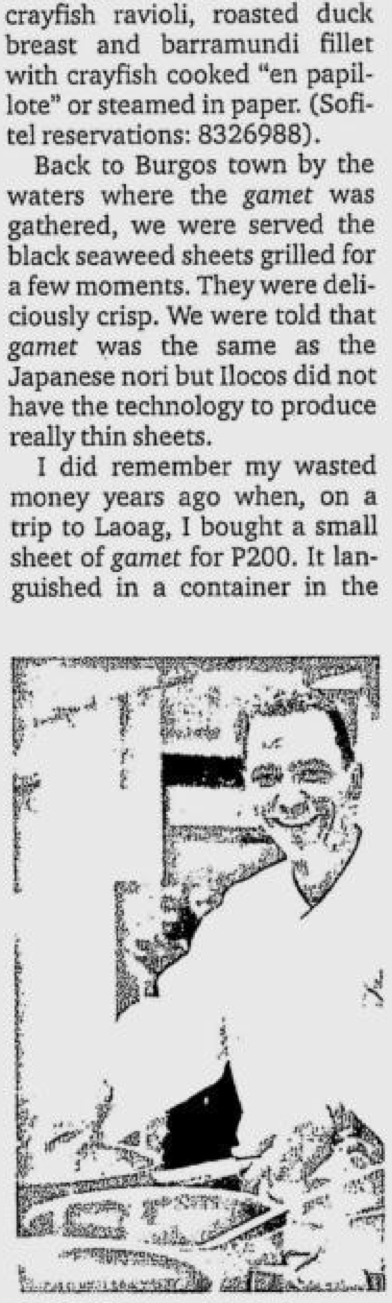
E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com



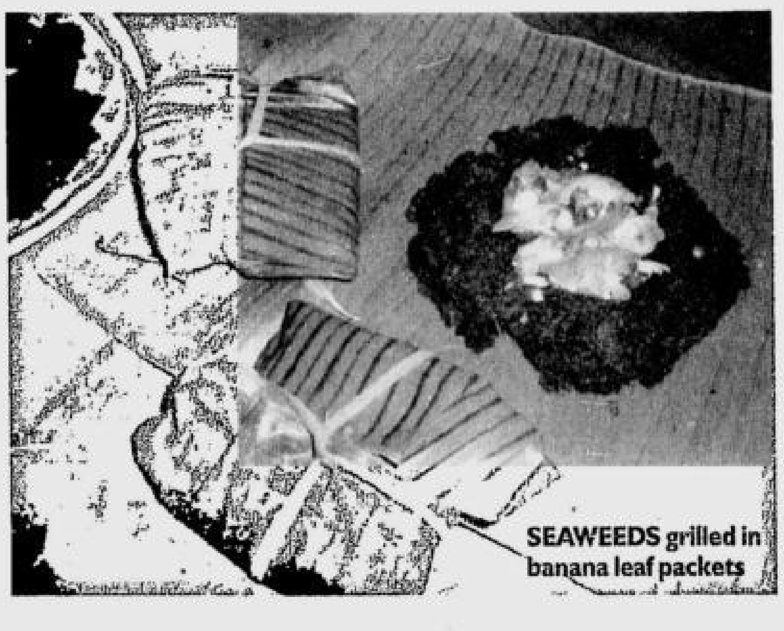
WHITE Alba Truffle



WHITE Alba Truffle Risotto with Parmesan



EXECUTIVE chef Christian Werdenberg



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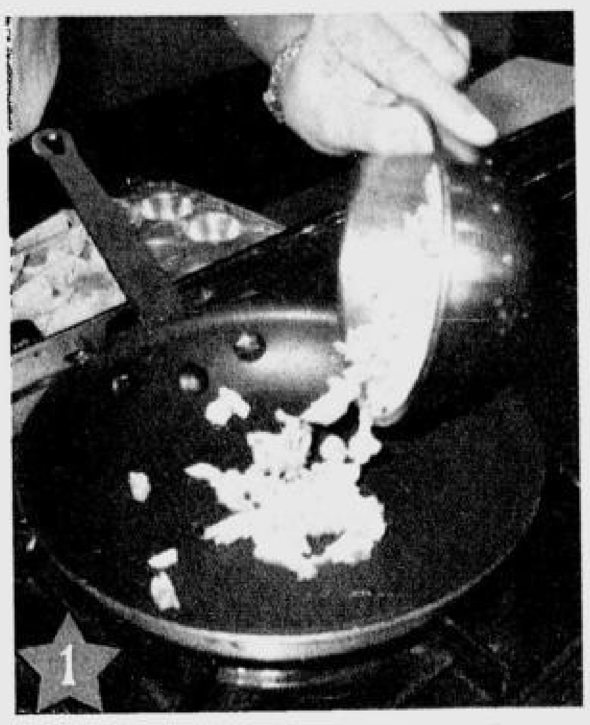
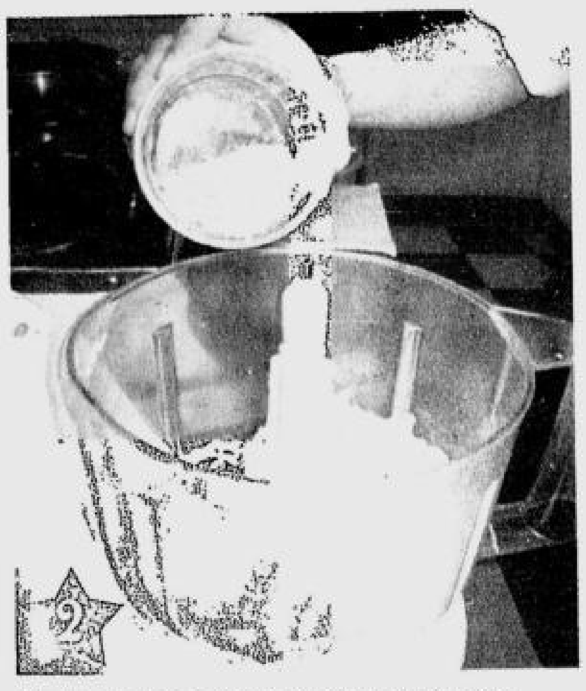
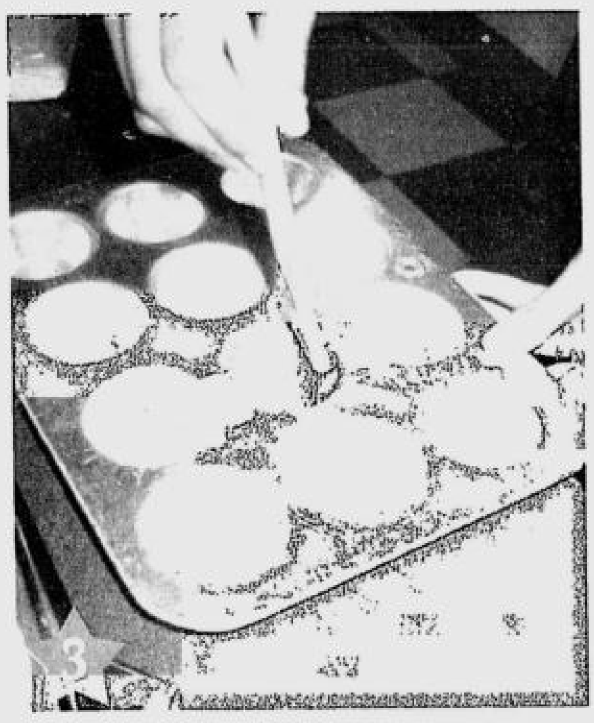


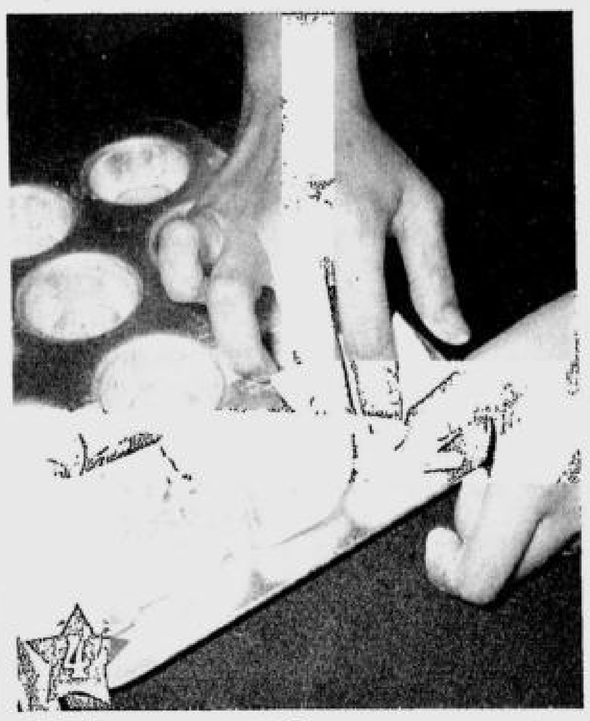
PAN-FRY bacon until crispy. Drain excess oil.



IN a food processor, combine bacon, cheeses, cashew and paprika. Mix well. Season to taste with salt.



GREASE muffin pans with butter.



PLACE two wrappers to form cups.

Pretty and tasty holiday appetizer

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

STEP BY STEP

SPOON cheese mixture into cups.

BAKE for five minutes in a 350°F preheated oven.

PRETTIFY YOUR HOLIDAY TABLE while whetting your guests' appetite with these delicious and easy-on-the-eye starters that will set the right mood for the rest of the meal.

Although it is still weeks before Christmas, it is never too early to think about what food to serve family and friends who will sit at your dining table. Remember, Christmas is the time of the year when guest lists are long.

Chef Michelle Peña, product application specialist of San Miguel PureFoods Culinary Center, demonstrates a special dish called Bocaditos Españoles, a crunchy, creamy and filling Spanish starter consisting of cream cheese, cashew, paprika and bacon and stuffed in *molo* wrapper.

If you want a crunchier, more delicate binder, Peña says you can use phyllo wrapper, a tissue-thin layer of pastry dough commonly used in various Greek and Near Eastern sweet and savory preparations, the best known being baklava and spanakopita. *Molo* and phyllo wrappers are available in most supermarkets.

BOCADITOS Españoles

This quick, easy-to-make bite-size food is also ideal for buffets and cocktail parties. The cheese filling can be made ahead of time.

This recipe serves six to eight persons.

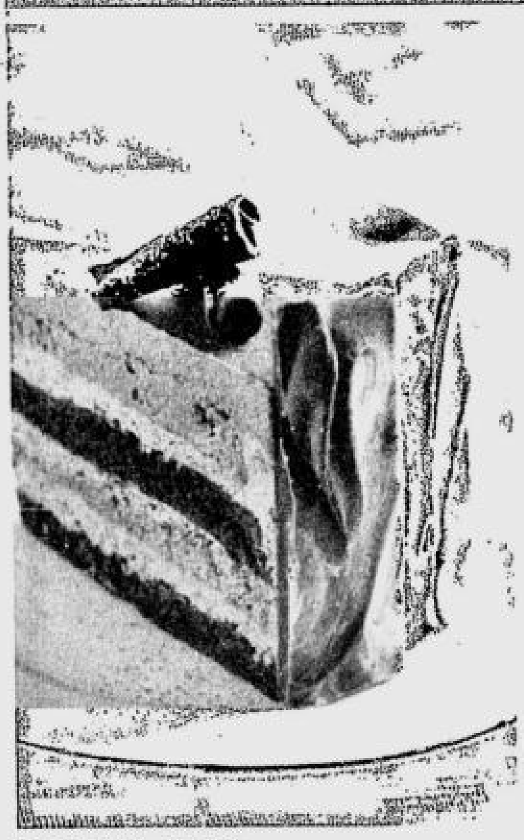
Ingredients

½ c Purefoods Bacon Bits and Ends, cooked and chopped
2 c Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese, grated
½ c Magnolia Cream Cheese, softened
½ c cashews, toasted, salted and chopped
1 tsp paprika
½ tsp salt (optional)
24 pcs molo wrapper
¼ c Magnolia Gold Butter, salted

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

REMOVE from pan and let cook in a rack.

No-fuss Noche Buena



MOCHA Manila Cake

CHRISTMAS EVE COMES JUST once a year. On this special occasion, time should be spent with family and friends, with no interruptions and no excuses. Sitting down at the traditional Noche Buena should be an experience worth the year-long wait. Serye Restaurant and Café offers you the chance to focus your time and energy on the things that really matter, gladly assuming the cumbersome task of preparing this special meal. The traditional Noche Buena can be at your table and on your plate without the hassles of jostling with other shoppers in the market or groceries.

Celebrate with a banquet of your favorite holiday dishes such as Christmas Ham, Roast Chicken with sticky rice and *chorizo* stuffing, Pastel de Lengua, Chicken Relleno, Embutido, Russian Salad, Leche Flan and Quezo de Bola.

Two packages are available: Grande Feast and Royale Feast. Each of these packages offers a combination of the above dishes and comes ready-to-serve in convenient containers. You may also opt to have them wrapped in a special decorative packaging for a more festive appeal. These packages serve 10-12 persons. Individual items may also be ordered. Top off the sumptuous feast with Serye's distinctly Filipino cakes and pastries. From bittersweet yet moist brownies that the whole family would love, to the memorable pineapple nostalgia pie, the exquisite muscovado cookies and the ever-popular Mocha Manila Cake.

Orders must be confirmed at least three days before delivery (9243411 or 4262693 for Quezon City and Manila clients and 8254691 or 8269317 for Makati and Parañaque).

Delivery is free in selected areas.

SERYE'S wide selection of pastries and desserts

Holiday deli selections

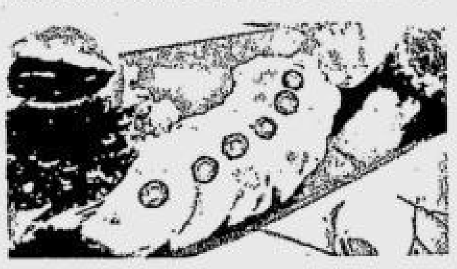
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, MOUNT Malarayat's culinary team under chef Guding Cecilia, is making available deli selections that will help make your Christmas dinner truly memorable.

The items are also suitable as gifts for friends and loved ones. The Mount Malarayat Virginia Ham is made from top quality pork hind leg cured using a secret combination of herbs and spices. Smoked to golden perfection and sugar glazed while baking in the oven, it comes with smoked honey raisin sauce.

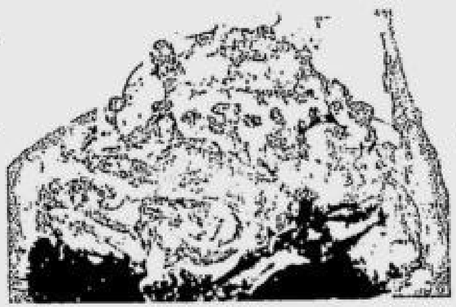
Choice pepper brisket of beef is used in beef pastrami, cured in select ingredients and slowly cooked until it is tender crisp. It is served with a tangy horseradish sauce.

For fish lovers there is Smoked Tanguingue, made from fine boneless tanguingue fillets prepared in brine and gradually cold smoked for a delicate but flavorful taste and rich aroma. It is paired with the chef's own zesty mustard dill sauce.

Also available is Chicken Galantina prepared the Mount Malarayat way—boneless chicken roll stuffed with a filling of ground pork, beef sausage, pickled cucumber and cheese, and served with Cumberland sauce (tel nos. 8140743 or 8931601).



CHICKEN Galantina



MOUNT Malarayat Virginia Ham

Cool Christmas treat

DAIRY QUEEN WHIPS UP A COOL TREAT for the season.

Its ice cream cake, good for a dozen servings, is 100-percent soft-serve ice cream layered with cold fudge and cookie crunch.

The DQ cakes, initially available at Dairy Queen in Eastwood City in Libis, come in popular Blizzard flavors—Oreo, M&M, and Chocolate Extreme. They can be prepared with toppings to suit any occasion.

Dairy Queen in the Philippines is owned and operated by the Araneta Group. Its signature product is the Blizzard, a vanilla-based treat with a chunky, upside-down twist.

Dairy Queen is located at Gateway Mall Food Express, Araneta Coliseum Circle, SM Southmall, TriNoma, Eastwood City, and Glorietta (www.dairyqueen.com.ph).

Revitalizing brew for coffee industry

KAPE ISLA IS A SOCIAL enterprise whose proceeds from the sales shall go to the promotion and revival of the Philippine coffee industry. Kape Isla is the flagship Philippine Coffee Hub of the Philippine Coffee Board, located at Serendra (across Market!Market!), Bonifacio Global City.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

'Golden Compass' gets PG rating

THE MOVIE AND Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) on Tuesday gave the controversial fantasy film "The Golden Compass" a "Parental Guidance" (PG) rating. MTRCB chair Marisa Laguardia said the board did not find its theme "anti-religious." *Marinel R. Cruz*

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A witness to history

IN CATANDUANES, on his bike named Bughaw, which is rigged with a camera.

Broadcast journalist Howie Severino's top 10 docus have been compiled on a DVD

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THERE'S A BURGEONING "documentary movement" in local TV, says broadcast journalist Howie Severino. This, he points out, is a "triumph of the audience."

He explains: "We've evolved as viewers. Docus have met a need for longer stories, serious content and in-depth treatment."

A former newspaper reporter, Severino shifted to broadcast a decade ago, on the docu show "Probe."

"I wasn't thinking in terms of content," he recalls. Today, that's exactly what he delivers, and not just for TV. "Docus are available on different platforms: TV, Internet, DVD and, in the future, cell phones and iTunes."

His documentaries for GMA 7's "I-Witness" are uploaded on YouTube by a fan.

Just recently, 10 of these were compiled on a DVD, "Ten Years of Howie Severino."

Schools

He also has his docus screened in schools. On the day of this interview, he was presenting "Lukayo" and "Mabuhay si Brod" in Miriam College and the University of the Philippines.

"So, I don't feel marginalized even if 'I-Witness' airs late, at midnight," he says. "If you miss my work on TV, you can catch it on other platforms."

Having student audiences, Severino believes, maximizes the docus' impact.

Jessica Soho, GMA 7 vice president for News and Public Affairs, has expressed a wish for the network's docus to be archived in libraries.

"That is coming true," Severino says, noting that digital technology has greatly helped documentarians.

"When I was starting, we were five in a team. Now I can do a docu on my own."

Two of the titles on the DVD were "solo productions"—"No Story is Worth Dying For" and "Lolo ng San Francisco."

When Severino embarks on such solitary projects, he travels with a camera rigged to his bicycle, which he has named Bughaw.

Not to diminish the role of technology, he

A WITNESS/ E2

DID YOU KNOW...

MAU MARCELO, RP bet in "Asian Idol," leaves today for Jakarta, where the competition will be held. Her manager, Sandra Chavez, said organizers picked "Ako ang Nagwagi" (originally by Dulce) and "Reach" (Gloria Estefan) as Mau's pieces. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

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Ramona Diaz film not going to Sundance yet

FROM RAMONA DIAZ (cinediaz2000@gmail.com)

In an article in this paper on Nov. 26, it was written that my new documentary film "The Learning" would be premiering at the Sundance Film Festival in January. This is incorrect. I have barely begun editing two years worth of footage, so it's impossible for me to even submit the film. And, although the film has been funded by the Sundance Documentary Fund, that is not a guarantee of acceptance into the festival. Maybe this is the crux of confusion—there is a difference between the Sundance Documentary Fund and the Sundance Film Festival. Receiving money from the fund does not guarantee acceptance into the festival. How I wish it were. But stay tuned, the film will be ready this time next year.

* * *

The story was based on interviews with Ms Diaz and Tony Gloria and Tito Velasco of co-producers Unitel/Unico.

The initial interview was with Diaz, in July, when the question regarding a Sundance premiere was first posed to her. She did not make the distinction then, between "grant recipient" and "entry." However, according to our transcript, she did say, "I have a deadline ... I hope I make it." The resulting story, published July 29, 2007, announced the premiere in Sundance 2008. Ms Diaz did not protest at the time. Unitel continued to include the information in succeeding media dispatches. The Nov. 26 story was based on interviews with Velasco and Gloria in October.

FEEDBACK

Niven, not Sellers

From Melchor Amado Jr. (melchoramadojr@yahoo.com):

The photo caption which appeared in page F4 of your Dec. 3 issue erroneously indicated that the actor with Claudia Cardinale is Peter Sellers instead of David Niven. Just an observation from an INQUIRER reader who is also a movie aficionado.

* *

Thank you, we appreciate this input.

A witness ...

From page E1

points out, his work is still basically about good storytelling.

"Interesting characters, some drama, a powerful narrative [are still the requisites]," he says. He admits he is attracted to history and culture issues, and asserts that "sex and violence" do not always spell ratings' gold.

He expounds: "A lot depends on treatment. If you are doing history for a popular audience, you have to offer a variety of experiences."

Thus, his recent "I-Witness" docu, "Bonifacio: The First President" featured historians alongside the Supremo's great-great-grandnephew, the Andres Bonifacio Concert Choir, and the film "Bayani."

Also on the DVD is "Pantasya ng Bayan," about the discovery of lost Filipino movies in Thailand.

"Hundreds of Tagalog movies are missing," he says. "Each one is a story in itself. That's a dream project."

TEN YEARS
HOWIE SEVERINO
GMA

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GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	3 GONE BABY GONE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 EASTERN PROMISE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 FRED CLAUS GUARANTEED SEATS		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 THE KINGDOM	3 EASTERN PROMISES	4 ENCHANTED	5 THE GOLDEN COMPASS		
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Ayala Malls

glorietta	Philippine Madrigal Singers with Robert Seña and Isay Alvarez December 8; 6pm; Glorietta 4 Park
GREENBELT	The Dawn Jazz Nights December 5; 7:30pm; Greenbelt 2 Al Fresco Area
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Southern Musicians Concert December 9; 5pm; Town Plaza
AYALA CENTER CEBU	FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-Cebu Permit No. 584, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31
MARKET! MARKET!	Christmas Shoes: A Christmas Musicale December 6; 7pm; Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents FIDDLER ON THE ROOF November 9 - December 16, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	WATER: THE MEDIUM by Juvenal Sanso November 24 to January 13, 2008; Ground Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Christmas Chorale featuring Martin Nievera December 6; 6pm; Activity Center Rhythm Academy: Sam Concepcion with the Augustinian Larks December 9; 6pm; Activity Center

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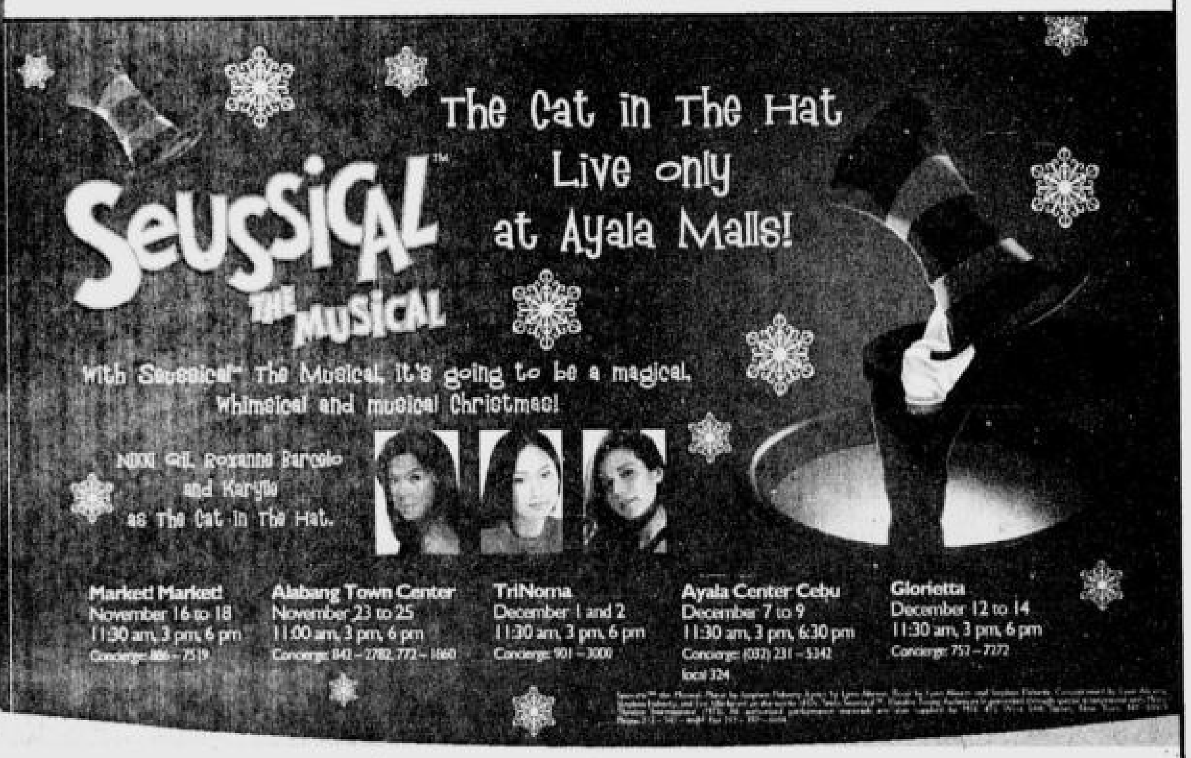
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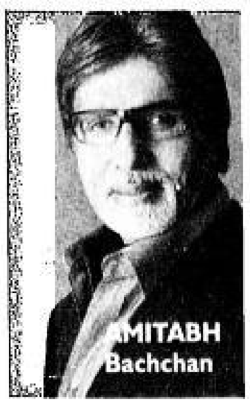

AMITABH Bachchan

CHEER FACTOR

New 'Aladdin' stars B'wood icon as genie

MUMBAI, INDIA—Already India's most popular actor, Amitabh Bachchan is set to win a whole new set of fans as he takes on his first kiddie film, it was reported Tuesday.

Bachchan, a Bollywood icon who has starred in more than 150 films, told the Times of India newspaper that he was playing a modern-day genie in a Bollywood adaptation of "Aladdin."

And the distinguished actor was enjoying the new role.

"Shooting is fun," Bachchan said. "I get to sing as many as three songs, dance and whoop it up."

He said he played the genie, "more as a modern dude than a costumed anachronism."

Director Sujoy Ghosh described "Aladdin" as Bachchan's "gift" to young fans, but said, "Adults are welcome." The film is set for release late next year. *AP*

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1 ENCHANTED / HITMAN 11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40 // 6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35 GP // R-13

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PROMENADE GREENHILLS
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3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS 11:20 , 2:10 , 5:00 , 7:50 , 10:40 GP

4 THE KINGDOM 11:00 , 1:20 , 3:40 , 6:00 , 8:20 , 10:35 R-13

5 THE GOLDEN COMPASS 10:40 , 1:30 , 4:20 , 7:10 , 10:00 GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	December 7 & 8 , 2007	"Into the Woods" musical	8:00 PM
	December 14 , 2007	Mark Herras	8:00 PM
	December 15 , 2007	The Company	8:00 PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	December 8 , 28 & 29 , 2007	Drag - Ons	10:00 PM
	December 20, 2007	Jed Madela	8:00 PM

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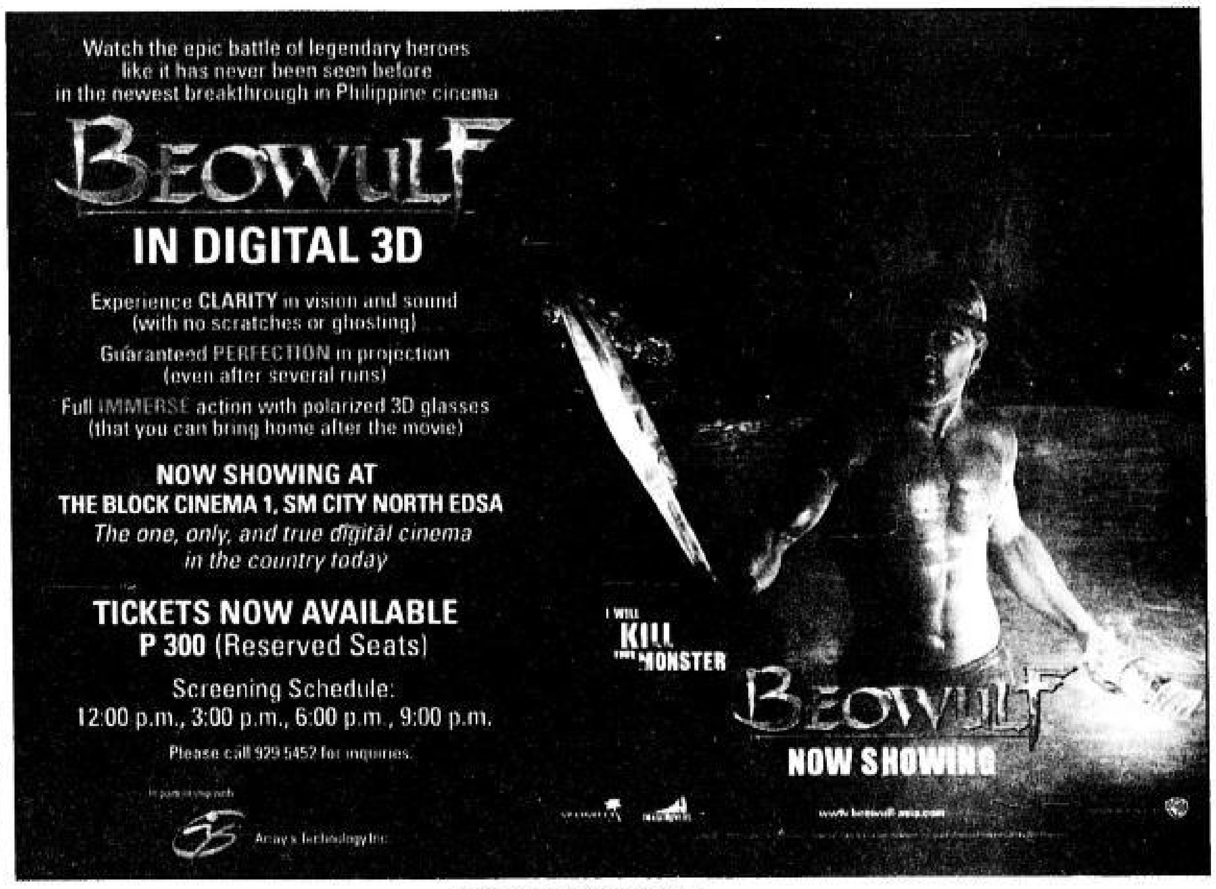

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2 HITMAN/ THE KINGDOM
3 ENCHANTED
4 EASTERN PROMISES
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 BATANES/ NARS

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1 BEOWULF (DIGITAL 3D)
2 HITMAN
3 ENCHANTED
4 THE KINGDOM
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
7 BATANES
8 EASTERN PROMISES
9 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
10 NARS
11 PASUKOB
12 BEOWULF

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE KINGDOM
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
5 ENCHANTED
6 BEOWULF
7 NARS
8 EASTERN PROMISES
9 HITMAN
10 PASUKOB
11 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
12 BATANES

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 FRED CLAUSE
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 PASUKOB
4 HITMAN
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 ENCHANTED
7 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
8 BATANES
9 BEOWULF
10 THE KINGDOM
11 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
12 NARS

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE KINGDOM
3 BATANES
4 NARS
5 PASUKOB
6 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB
3 GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE KINGDOM

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 EASTERN PROMISES
5 PASUKOB
6 ENCHANTED
7 HITMAN
8 BEOWULF
9 NARS

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BEOWULF
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
5 BATANES
6 PASUKOB
7 ENCHANTED
8 NARS
9 THE KINGDOM
10 HITMAN

NOW OPEN

SM SUPERCENTER MUNTINLUPA 862 5693

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 GOLDEN COMPASS
3 THE KINGDOM
4 PASUKOB

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE KINGDOM
3 EASTERN PROMISES
4 PASUKOB
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
7 BEOWULF
8 BATANES
9 NARS
10 MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
11 HITMAN
12 ENCHANTED

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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BEOWULF
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE/ THE KINGDOM

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1 HITMAN
2 ENCHANTED
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 BEOWULF
6 PASUKOB
7 BATANES
8 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 THE KINGDOM/ FRED CLAUSE
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 PASUKOB
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 BATANES

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 THE GAME PLAN
2 HITMAN
3 PASUKOB
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

LUZON

NOW OPEN

SM CITY TAYTAY 286-2502 to 04

1 PASUKOB
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 BATANES

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 PASUKOB
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 BEOWULF

SM CITY PAMPANGA (046)9637681-88

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE GAMEPLAN
3 BEOWULF
4 BATANES
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 PASUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (040)5340811

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 BATANES
3 FRED CLAUSE/ PASUKOB
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 ONE MORE CHANCE
2 HITMAN
3 PASUKOB
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 ENCHANTED/ LIONS FOR LAMBS
2 PASUKOB
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ENCHANTED
3 THE GAME PLAN
4 ONE MORE CHANCE
5 PASUKOB
6 THE KINGDOM

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ONE MORE CHANCE
3 PASUKOB
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2076996

1 HITMAN
2 NARS/ BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 11TH HOUR
5 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 HITMAN
3 ENCHANTED/ PASUKOB
4 BEOWULF

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 THE GAME PLAN
2 BATANES
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
5 ENCHANTED
6 THE KINGDOM
7 RESERVED
8 PASUKOB

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 HITMAN
2 ENCHANTED
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE NANNY DIARIES
5 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
6 BATANES
7 PASUKOB
8 ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010

1 THE GAME PLAN
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 LIONS FOR LAMBS
4 PASUKOB

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ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

MOVIEWORLD

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

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GALLERIA

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS • THX
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 indieSine: KONTRA AGOS
4 THE KINGDOM
5 BATANES
6 EASTERN PROMISES
7 THE GOLDEN COMPASS / ONE MORE CHANCE
8 BEOWULF
9 HITMAN
10 ENCHANTED

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Robinsons Movieworld Galleria (6-7PM)

MTRCB Rating: R18

ERMITA

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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 indieSine: TUKSO
3 BATANES
4 EASTERN PROMISES
5 HITMAN / BEOWULF
6 PASUKOB
7 ONE MORE CHANCE

Midtown

1 ENCHANTED / THE KINGDOM
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 682-8193 - 682-8199

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 THE KINGDOM
4 BATANES
5 ONE MORE CHANCE
6 PASUKOB
7 ENCHANTED
8 HITMAN / BEOWULF

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price: P90 / P100 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 BATANES
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 ENCHANTED
4 PASUKOB

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 / P110 687-5378

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 BATANES
4 PASUKOB

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P80 / P90 (049) 837-0907

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 FRED CLAUS
4 PASUKOB

LIPA

Ticket Price: P 90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS / BEOWULF

DASMARIÑAS

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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 HITMAN
4 PASUKOB
5 GAME PLAN

IMUS

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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 THE KINGDOM

ANGELES

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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 GAME PLAN
4 PASUKOB

TARLAC

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BEOWULF
3 BATANES

STARMILLS

(045) 874-1927

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 GAME PLAN
4 PASUKOB
5 ENCHANTED
6 ONE MORE CHANCE

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P70 (034) 441-0459

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 WE OWN THE NIGHT
4 LIONS FOR LAMBS
5 GAME PLAN
6 indieSine: KONTRA-AGOS / PASUKOB

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P70.50 / P80.50 (033) 336-8070

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 WE OWN THE NIGHT
4 GAME PLAN
5 PASUKOB
6 THE KINGDOM

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MOVIE GUIDE
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1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 ENCHANTED
3 THE KINGDOM
4 HITMAN

PREMIERE

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 ENCHANTED
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 THE KINGDOM

Starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7268160

3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) BATANES
5

Metropolis Star Cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8804288, 8433894

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 BEOWULF

THEATRES

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-8271

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3
4

Filinvest Festival Cinema
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 HITMAN
2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3 EASTERN PROMISES
4 ENCHANTED
5 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
7 THE KINGDOM
8 RESERVED
9 ONE MORE CHANCE
10 BATANES

Blue Wave Marikina
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) THE GOLDENT COMPASS
2 (DOLBY) BATANES
3 (DOLBY) THE GOLDENT COMPASS
4 (DOLBY) PASUKOB

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 BATANES
5 THE GOLDENT COMPASS

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 BATANES
2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
3 ONE MORE CHANCE
4 PASUKOB

Masagana Cinema
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 PASUKOB
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
3 BATANES

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 LIONS FOR LAMBS
2. THE GOLDENT COMPASS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 GAME PLAN

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 PASUKOB
2 BATANES

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 ENCHANTED
2 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
3 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
4 THE KINGDOM

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Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB
3 THE GOLDENT COMPASS
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111140

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 BEOWULF

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 BATANES
2 PASUKOB

Lianas Cinema
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1 GHOST SON
2 PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 BATANES
2 PLEASE CALL
3 PLEASE CALL
4 HITMAN

Lianas MovieCity
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1 GHOST SON
2 PLEASE CALL
3 BATANES S
4 PASUKOB
5 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2 BATANES
3 PASUKOB
4 ONE MORE CHANCE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

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2

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POWER PLANT CINEMA

ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41

DOLBY DIGITAL

FRED CLAUS G 12:10,2;35,5:00, 7:25,9:50	THE GOLDEN COMPASS 11:40,4;10,6:40,9:10	THE GOLDEN COMPASS / ENCHANTED G 7:20,9:50 / 12:00,2:20,4:50
THE KINGDOM R13 12:30,2:55,5;20, 7:45,10:10	EASTERN PROMISES R13 1:10,3:25,5:40, 7:55,10:10	THE GOLDEN COMPASS 1 2:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

① GOLDEN COMPASS
MTRCB GP

② ENCHANTED
MTRCB GP
2:15, 4 40, 7:05, 9:30

③ HITMAN
MTRCB R 13
1 00, 3:10, 5:20
BEOWULF
MTRCB PG-13
7 30 10 00

④ THE KINGDOM
MTRCB R-13
12:40, 3 00, 5.20, 7 40, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE — GOLDEN COMPASS
MTRCB GP

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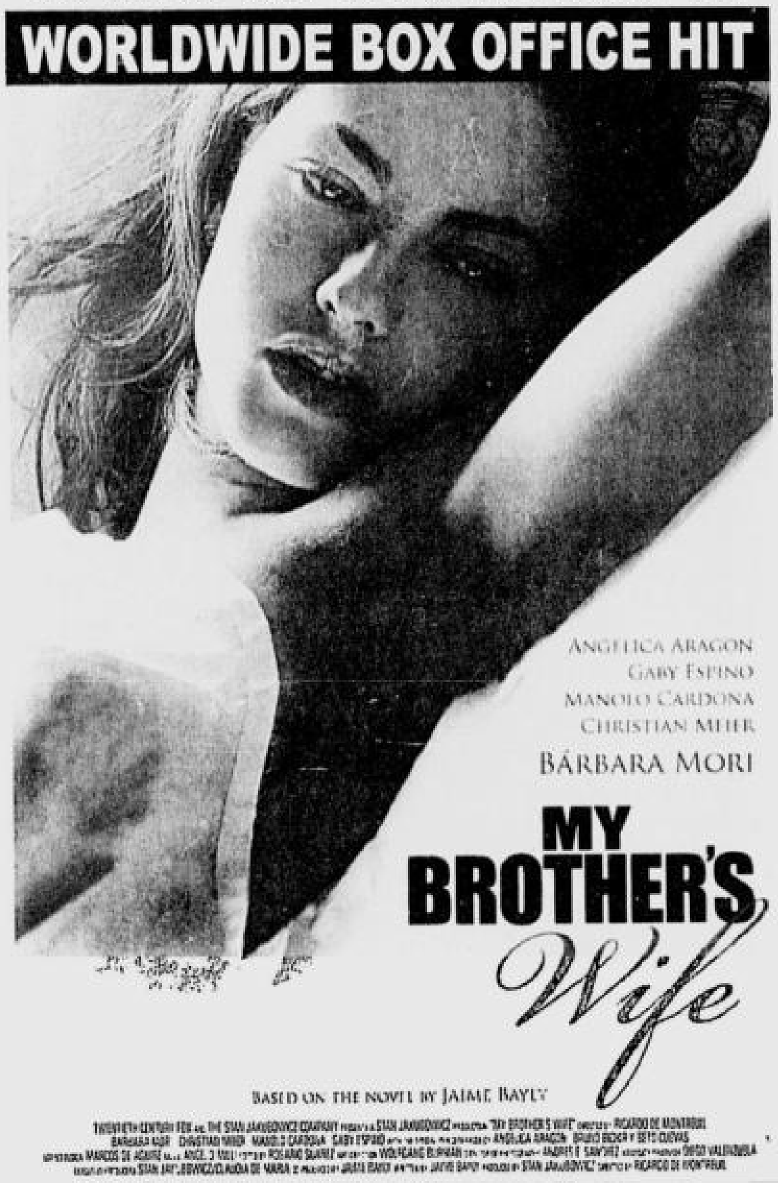

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY JAIME BAYLY

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

---

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For inquiries, call:
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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 ENCHANTED
3:05, 5:30, 8:05, 10:35
G

2 GOLDEN COMPASS

3 GOLDEN COMPASS

4 THE KINGDOM
3:35, 6:05, 8:35,11:05
R-13

Vilma's career distinguished by exceptional performances

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AFTER OUR ARTICLE ON NORA Aunor's "amazing" filmography came out, we received requests from some Vilmanians for "equal time" for their idol Vilma Santos' own career output in the movies.

Since we're a Noranian *and* a Vilmanian at the same time (we have no principles), we hastily and delightedly comply:

Vilma's filmography, from 1963 to 2004, turns out to be even more extensive than Nora's, for the simple reason that she started acting at an earlier age—and had fewer inactive periods than the Superstar.

Almost 200 movies in 40-plus years—that's a major achievement, especially since quite a number of those films are so choice.

Vilma's first major film outing was in the title role of "Trudis Liit," when the wee actress was only nine years old. She made such a good impression in the plum role that she was cast in four other movies in 1963. Talk about starting your career with a big bang!

In 1965, Vilma played Irene Marcos in "Iginuhit ng Tadhana." By 1969, however, the erstwhile child star had grown up enough to star in teen romances, like the quintessential *kilig* flick, "My Pledge of Love," co-starring her first *ka*-love team, Edgar Mortiz.

Many other such films followed, interrupted only by unexpected action movies like "Takbo, Vilma, Dali!" (1972).

That same year, Vilma was directed by *the* Ishmael Bernal in one of her better movies, "Inspirasyon." For the first time, movie people realized that the popular teen star could also be a fine actress!

Major landmark

That heartening possibility peaked later that year, when Vilma won her first Best Actress award for her performance in "Dama de Noche." That was a major landmark for Vilma, who had always played second fiddle and also-ran to Nora Aunor in the awards department.

By 1974, the maturing actress was tackling even more demanding roles in movies like "Biktima," while appearing in the occasional musical ("King Khayam and I") and going the *komiks* fantasy route with "Dyesebel" and "Lipad, Darna, Lipad!"

Vilma's more substantial movies during the mid-'70s include "Bato sa Buhangin," "Dalawang Pugad, Isang Ibon" and "Masarap, Masakit ang Umibig." Then, she took her biggest and most daring step forward as a young-adult thespian by starring in the (then) "shocking" "Burlesk Queen," directed by Celso Ad. Castillo.

In 1978, she made another important film, "Pagputi ng Uwak, Pag-itim ng Tagak," also by Castillo. Then came "Rubia Servios," "Pakawalan Mo Ako," "T-Bird at Ako," "Relasyon," "Broken Marriage"—capped by her superlative portrayal of an activist nun in "Sister Stella L."

The good roles—and awards—came fast and furious by this time. Soon enough, Vilma decided to take time off to focus on her family—and, later, to enter politics (with similarly great success).

Still, she would occasionally come up with gems like "Dahil Mahal Kita (Dolzura Cortez)," "Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa?," "Anak" and "Dekada '70."

Vilma may not have acted on the big screen since 2004's "Mano Po, 3" but she remains a major star of Filipino movies, and film buffs look forward to viewing another exceptional portrayal by her in 2008.

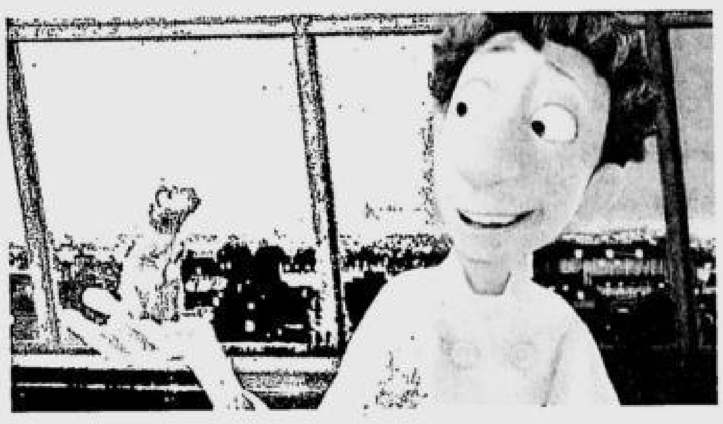
Her political star may be rising—and it could reach stratospheric heights in 2010, as some political observers excitedly speculate. But Vilma "owes" it to the Filipino movie-going public to inspire her loyal fans with another masterful characterization. She's the Star for *All* Seasons, remember?

Writers Night

On Dec. 8 at UP Diliman, Writers Night starts off at 5:30 p.m. with the awarding ceremony of the Madrigal-Gonzalez Best First Book Award at the Teatro Hermogenes Ylagan. Among the sterling nominees are Dean Francis Alfar's "Salamanea," Barbara-Ann Gamboa Lewis' "Barefoot in Fire," Maria Isabel Garcia's "Science Solitaire," Rica Bolipata-Santos' "Love, Desire, Children, Etc.," Helen Yap's "From Inside the Berlin Wall" and Katrin de Guia's "Kapwa, The Self in the Other."

"Likhain 2007: The Journal of Contemporary Philippine Literature," edited by Jose Y. Dalisay, J. Neil Garcia and Lilia Quindoza Santiago, will also be launched. A party will take place in the same venue, with performances by invited guests—and a mock fashion show. Call Eva Cadiz at 922-1830.

ROUNDUP



13 Annie nods for 'Ratatouille'

LOS ANGELES—THE RODENT tale "Ratatouille" leads contenders for the Annie Awards honoring animation, picking up 13 nominations, among them Best Picture and voice-acting honors for Patton Oswalt, Ian Holm and Janeane Garofalo.

"Ratatouille," from Disney and Pixar Animation, was joined in the Best Animated Feature category by DreamWorks' "Bee Movie," Sony Pictures' "Surf's Up," Sony Pictures Classics' "Persepolis" and 20th Century Fox's "The Simpsons Movie."

Presented by the International Animated Film Society, Annie Award winners in 25 film and TV categories will be announced in Los Angeles, Feb. 8.

Among other nominations for "Ratatouille" were Best Director for Brad Bird, whose "The Incredibles," also from Disney and Pixar, won the 2004 Academy Award and Annie for Best Animated Feature.

'Not guilty'–Akon

AKON

FISHKILL, New York—Hip-hop star Akon pleaded not guilty Monday to criminal charges resulting from an incident here earlier this year when he tossed a fan off the stage at a concert.

The 34-year-old singer, a recent Manila visitor, was released on his own recognizance following a brief court appearance. He was charged with misdemeanor endangering the welfare of a minor.

Model search winners

SARAH PAOLA Polverini (center, below) was declared Miss St. Francis Square and Miss St. Francis Square Tiangge in the first SFS (in Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong) model search recently. The other winners were (from left): Bernice Tan, Miss St. Francis Generic Drugstore; Shasta Valenzuela, 2nd runner-up and Miss St. Francis Department Store; Francesca Avila, 3rd runner-up and Miss St. Francis Bookstore; and Michelle Ferriols, Miss Golden Gate Supermarket.

RYAN CAYABYAB RCS. From left, Poppert Bernadas, Kyla Rivera, Irra Cenina, Ryan Cayabyab, Jaime Barcelona, Kaich Tiuseco, Vincent Evangelista and Anezka Alvarez

And now, Ryan Cayabyab Singers

By Pocholo Concepcion

THE PIANIST-COMPOSER AFFECTIONately known as Mr. C was beaming as he introduced his newly formed vocal group, the RCS (Ryan Cayabyab Singers).

Midway into a sneak performance at the Holiday Inn Hotel Ortigas Center to promote the group's self-titled debut album, Cayabyab talked about his wards with pride: "When we performed in Davao, the crowd gave them six standing ovations..."

A little history here: Early this year, Cayabyab had been freed from obligations as head of the disbanded San Miguel Master Chorale. He wanted to write again, the sort he was said to have loved most, songs for a pop vocal group—this time, not an adolescent type like Smokey Mountain, but something "more mature."

High-energy

When Cayabyab called for auditions, almost 200 responded, 37 were called back, 18 stood out and seven made it to the final cut.

"I wanted to get an eighth member, a Fil-Am who was really good," Cayabyab said. "But she had a scholarship waiting at Rutgers University so I let her go."

The remaining seven, mostly in their mid-20s, have impressive credentials. Anezka Alvarez is from the UST Conservatory of Music; Irra Ceniza, from the DLSU Chorale; Kaich Tiuseco, from the UP Concert Chorus; Vincent Evangelista, from the UST Singers; Kyla Rivera and Jaime Barcelon have had stints with Repertory Philippines. And though Poppert Bernales is primarily an athlete (captain of the UP Badminton team), he must've shown enough singing talent to have been picked, too.

At the sneak performance, the group was obviously raring to win the media over with theatrical, high-energy showmanship. Ceniza took the first solo part and sounded fine, but his makeup was distracting.

The rest showed diverse vocal ranges, with the girls shining through, although the guys at times seemed to dominate with their deeper timbre. But Tiuseco was captivating, her dusky looks complementing her bluesy singing style.

The songs Cayabyab wrote for RCS have a recurring image of relationships affected by communication technology. At least three of the new tracks describe the role that talking or texting on the phone play in the blossoming or breakup of romance.

The ones with less-than exciting lyrics ("Call Me, Call Me" and "Pahamak") connect through the music, which has a warm, natural sound because it was recorded live and used real (as opposed to synthesized) instruments.

On the other hand, there are songs whose words keep up the action till the very last line, such as the tiff between a woman and her call center-employed boyfriend in "Ayoko Na" (*"Madafa ka rin sana!"*), and the remorseful consequence of unexpressed love in "Ba't 'Di Mo Sinabi" (*"Kung 'di ka ba gago/Sana'y may asawa na ako..."*).

Two revivals

A couple of old Cayabyab originals are revived: "Hibang sa Awit" (lyrics by Jose Javier Reyes), first recorded by The Tux with a symphonic arrangement, now swings with a jazz tempo; and "Hello Joe, Goodbye," an obscure 1970s tune which sadly sounds like filler material.

Apparently, the showcase tracks are those about love lost ("Hiling," "Paano Na 'To?"), but there's one happy tune ("Hideaway") that captures the essence of RCS — a vibrant group trying to fulfill its creator's desire to produce a new generation of singers who can adapt to various pop styles.

From here, a lot would depend on the group's next major performance.

Tantalizing crime thriller cut short

REVIEW

NEW YORK—IT COULD HAVE BEEN EPIC, this tale of Russian mobsters prowling the London underworld. It could have been an instant classic—David Cronenberg's "Godfather," perhaps.

But in an industry in which directors can't seem to bring in a picture at a reasonable length, Cronenberg's "Eastern Promises" feels tantalizingly too short.

It's both brutally violent and breathtakingly human. It's a crime thriller, yes, but through Cronenberg's peculiar perspective, working from a script by Steve Wright, it's never standard or obvious. In claustrophobic settings both bleak and garishly opulent, the film holds you in an increasingly tight grip and then it just ... ends, clipped suddenly, leaving you longing for more.

Until the last possible second, though, Viggo Mortensen coolly dominates as a driver for a Russian crime family who would be getting his hands dirty carrying out extra duties for them if he weren't wearing black leather gloves. He plays a sort of mirror image of his character in Cronenberg's "A History of Violence": Through subtle expressions and an understated delivery, he's a dangerous man capable of unexpected flashes of decency. And while he's a physical specimen to behold—and we get to behold all of him in a much ballyhooed nude bathhouse braw—it's his interior transformation that's far more impressive.

Someone to fear

Tattooed, sinewy and slickly dressed, speaking thickly accented English (as well as solid Russian), Mortensen's Nikolai is obviously someone to fear but also a source of understandable fascination for naive British midwife Anna (Naomi Watts), who crosses his path while looking for the family of a teenage prostitute who died while giving birth in her care.

Fourteen-year-old Tatiana left behind a diary, which Anna can't read despite being half-Russian on her late father's side. Living back at home with her mother (Sinead Cusack) after a bad breakup, she gives the diary to her drunk, surly uncle Stepan (Jerzy Skolimowski) to translate, but he's initially reluctant to learn a dead girl's secrets.

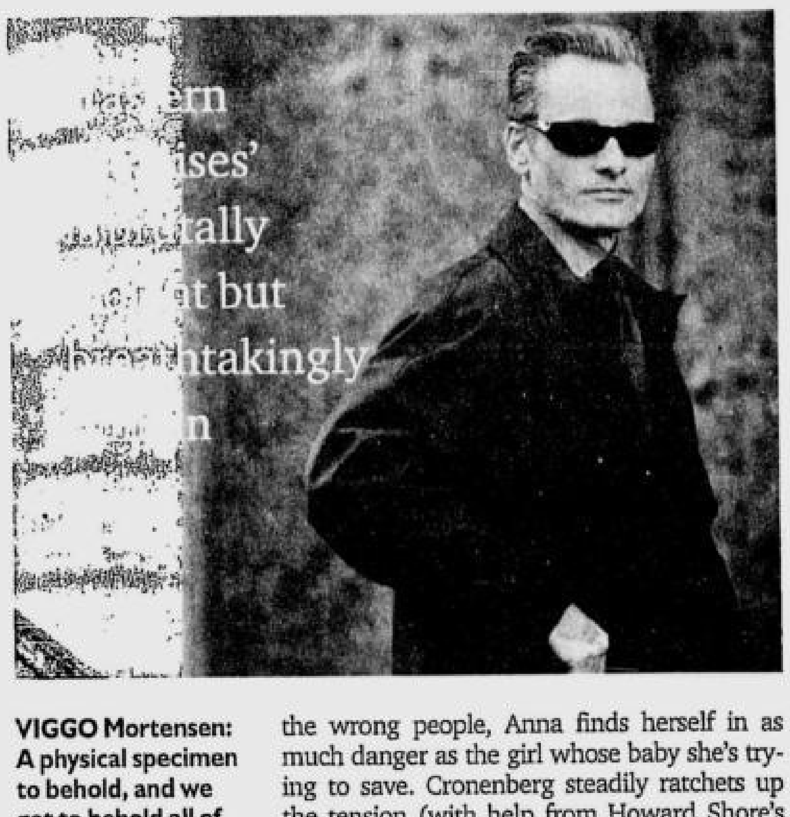
But inside the book is a business card for the upscale restaurant, where Anna turns up one day, hoping to find answers. Instead she finds Semyon (the formidable Armin Mueller-Stahl), the kind, elderly proprietor who has gourmet tastes and seems like a gentle soul but is actually a crime boss in the Vory V Zakone brotherhood, for which the restaurant is a front.

He's only too glad to help Anna and, innocently, she makes a copy of the diary for him to read. Each time she returns to the restaurant, though, she runs into the handsome, mysterious Nikolai, a man of few words to whom she nonetheless finds herself perversely drawn. She also has several unpleasant encounters with Kirill (the giddily off-kilter Vincent Cassel), Semyon's volatile son and enforcer who has an inordinately strong connection to Nikolai.

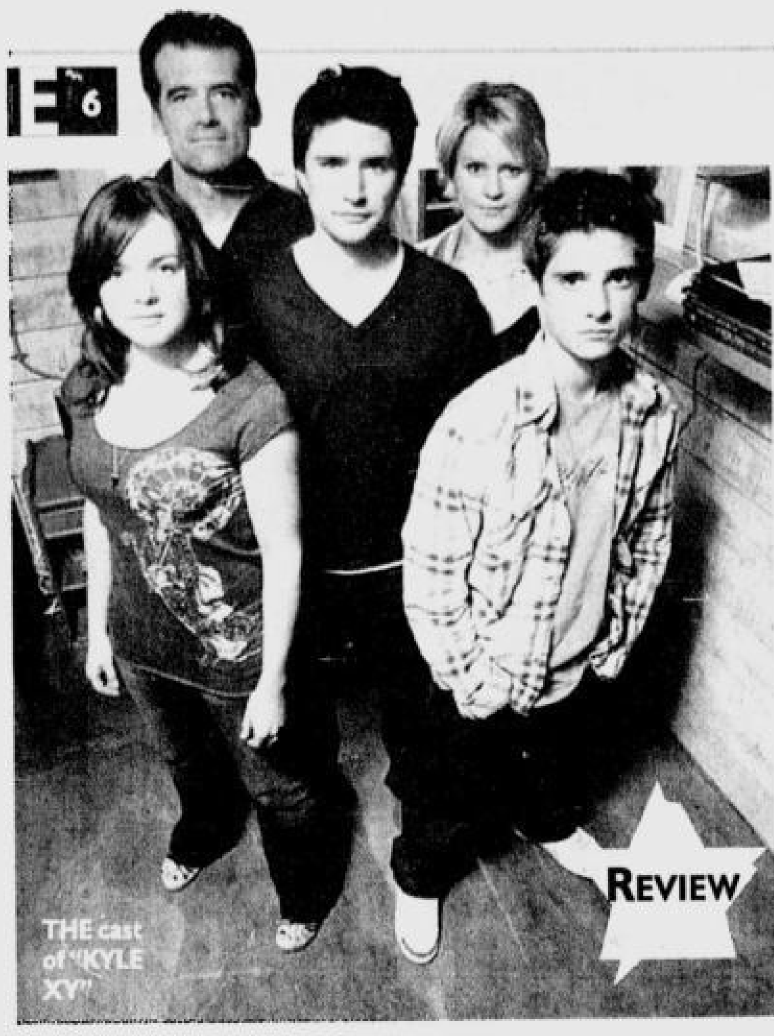
And so the doomed Tatiana's story unfolds in voiceover as two old-school Russian men learn her secrets simultaneously. There were drugs and beatings and rapes, and promises of a better life that never materialized (Knight explores some of the same themes of misplaced immigrant optimism as in his Oscar-nominated screenplay for "Dirty Pretty Things").

Eventually, by asking the right questions of the wrong people, Anna finds herself in as much danger as the girl whose baby she's trying to save. Cronenberg steadily ratchets up the tension (with help from Howard Shore's score) and there are moments so raw and intense you'll find yourself inclined to turn away —and yet, like Anna, find that you cannot.

Christy Lemire, AP



VIGGO Mortensen: A physical specimen to behold, and we get to behold all of him here.



THE cast of "KYLE XY"

Cool meets brainy in 'Kyle XY'

This show doesn't talk down to its audience

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

IN THE FIRST SEASON OF STUDIO 23'S weekly drama "Kyle XY," an amnesiac teen without a belly button (Matt Dallas) is adopted by a caring family before he discovers the truth behind his extraordinary abilities—including an elephantine memory and photo-realistic artistry.

Aptly imperfect

It's a unique show, primarily because it presents a functioning bond between familiar science fiction concepts and melodrama-free family dynamics. Kyle, who knows nothing about himself, but a lot about a zillion other things, contributes tremendously to the growth of the Trager family.

The gradual development of his social skills was well-told, though slowly paced. But in a matter of episodes, Kyle accomplished many things, indeed he became his school's basketball star. He effortlessly solved a vaunted math puzzle. And he learned about human history by reading a multi-volume encyclopedia set in one sitting! Not bad for someone who sleeps in a dry bathtub.

"Kyle XY" doesn't talk down to its audience. The Tragers are a pretty normal unit—aptly imperfect. Sensitive topics such as sex, drugs, religion and homosexuality are tackled in a refreshing and mature way. Kyle's adoptive siblings Lori and Josh (April Matson and Jean-Luc Bilodeau) occasionally get in trouble, but they help him get assimilated into the teen community. The parents make for interesting stories, too. In an enlightening scene, therapist mom Nicole (charismatically played by Marguerite MacIntyre) and opinionated dad Stephen (Bruce Thomas) discuss the loss of their daughter's virginity, an otherwise awkward scenario that's handled with extreme care.

By the end of season one, "Kyle XY" has revealed much about the lead character, and explains how a mystery figure (Nicholas Lea) is involved in his complicated existence. It's a satisfying unveiling, but a supposed technologically advanced facility that prominently features in this aspect looks too low-budget and unconvincing. Regardless, the truth about Kyle's nature, makes perfect sense.

The second season (Wednesdays, 8:30 p.m.) introduces Jessi XX (Jamie Alexander), a navel-less teen girl "programmed" to cause problems for the Tragers.

Sharp contrast

Kyle, meanwhile, has grown, and is now fully acclimated in his environment. His mind is triggering bodily changes that give him new "powers." It's still very much about him trying to fit in. Like the show, the character is that rare and wondrous amalgam of cool and brainy.

The current episodes are better-paced and tackle more touchy subjects. The longer arcs that revolve around Kyle's enigmatic past may unduly convolute his history, if new bits of information keep muddling things every few episodes. But the addition of Jessi, a weird product of nature and nurture gone haywire, further shapes Kyle Trager's character and provides a sharp contrast. And there's still that continued focus on selflessness and self-discovery, which made "Kyle XY" Season 1 a profound, must-watch show.

Mystic Pete at Yoga Manila

MYSTIC PETE AND ALMA CIELO wind up their Philippine tour with a performance at the Yoga Manila Christmas party this week.

The two are at the forefront of the emerging spiritual consciousness movement in Los Angeles, with their meditation music that mixes modern sounds and ancient harmonies and explores human emotions, from passion to serenity. Their audiences have been known to lie back and relax, breathing deeply, and opening their minds.

Email yogamanila@gmail.com, or text (0917)522-9642.

'For Heart's Sake'

Regine Velasquez and Ogie Alcasid perform in "For Heart's Sake—A Valentine in December Concert" tonight at Crossroads 77, Mother Ignacia St. Quezon City.

The show is for the benefit of the Children's Heart Foundation. Call 916-5453; 916-7629; and 825-2401 loc. 3643 for tickets.

'Diva-licious!'

Pops Fernandez celebrates her 25th anniversary in show biz with "Diva-licious!"—a concert on Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Guests include Gary Valenciano, Kuh Ledesma, Billy Crawford, Jay-R and Sharon Cuneta. Call 911-5555 or 633-9825 for tickets.

Tomorrow

Vertical Horizon, Rivermaya and Jamie Kennedy at the Araneta Coliseum.

Dec. 8

The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO), The Company and the UP Concert Chorus, 5 p.m. at the Peninsula Manila Lobby, Makati.

Dec. 28

Pooh, 8:30 p.m. at the Music Museum. Call 435-1120 for tickets.

OGIE Alcasid and Regine Velasquez

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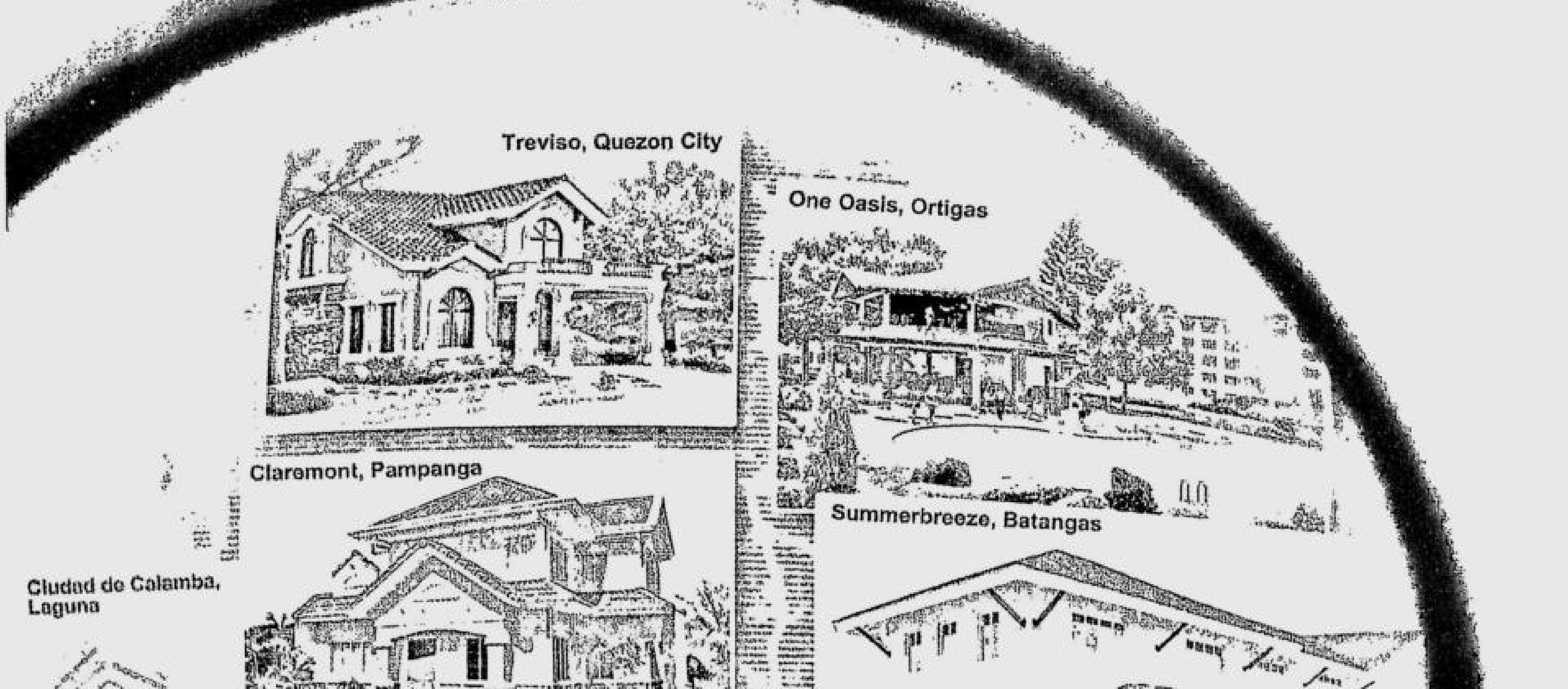

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Department of Energy 35 years

December is National Energy Consciousness Month

The Department of Energy (DOE) leads the nation today in the month-long celebration of energy consciousness and conservation.

The celebration will include various activities to mark the 35th Anniversary of the DOE on December 17 – 21 mostly to be held at its main office at Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City and elsewhere.

The theme of the celebration is "Fuelling Philippine Development Through Greater Access to Clean Energy."

Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes will lead DOE officials, employees and industry leaders in implementing the importance and urgency of energy conservation and efficiency in helping the national economy grow.

Reyes, who took over in August 2007, became the 9th DOE Secretary.

The Department of Energy traces its beginning in 1972 with the signing by then President Marcos of Presidential Decree 87, or the Oil Exploration and Development Act of 1972, which created the Petroleum Board. This was followed during the same year with the creation of the Philippine National Oil Company through PD 334.

In 1977, PD 1206 created the Department of Energy with two line bureaus: Bureau of Energy Development and Bureau of Energy Utilization.

A major component of the activity is to help achieve energy self-sufficiency as well as to develop renewable sources of energy.

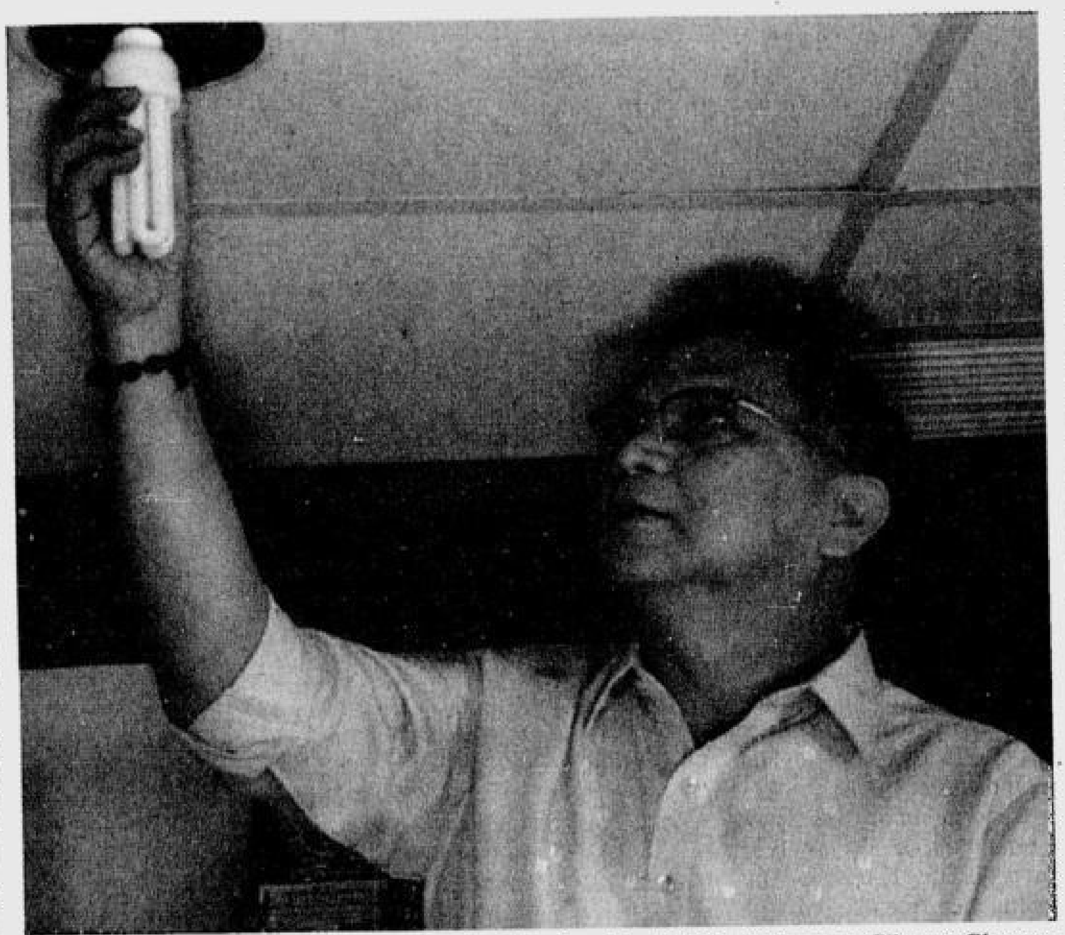
The program aims to impart on everyone the significance of energy resources and ways to conserve energy.

One aspect of the strategy is the switching from the use of incandescent bulbs to the more energy-efficient compact fluorescent lamps (CFL) in public hospitals. The campaign will later be expanded to include other public places and even companies and households.

The DOE is also committed to develop sources of energy in the country, by pushing for the passage of the Renewable Sources of Energy bill in Congress.

The eventual implementation of the renewable sources of energy bill is expected to attract local and foreign investors to explore, develop and utilize the country's abundant geothermal, hydro and wind power, although the technology to these energy sources are more expensive than those used to develop fossil fuels like oil, coal and natural gas.

The DOE emphasized that it is also tasked with introducing improvements in the electric power industry through the implementation of the planned amendments to the Electric Power Industry Reforms Act of 2001 (EPIRA) to ensure and accelerate the total development of the country.



Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes, head of the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change, spearheads the change from the use of incandescent bulbs to compact fluorescent lamps.

At the same time, Secretary Reyes said the passage of the Biofuels Act of 2006 will spur the development of the local biofuels industry, saying:

"Biofuels will be a major component of energy self-sufficiency."

Biofuels will effectively lessen the country's dependence on expensive imported petrol and petrol products, he added.

The country is expected to benefit more in terms of savings from fuel expenses with the expected passage by Congress of the Renewable Energy Bill which has been certified as a priority measure by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

The passage of the bill is expected to make the country the top geothermal energy and wind energy producer in the world

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Presidential Task Force on Climate Change

RP joins global action to tackle climate change

Today, the time for doubt has passed. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has unequivocally affirmed the warming of our climate system, and linked it directly to human activity… Slowing or even reversing the existing trends of global warming is the defining challenge of our ages.

This is the urgent call made by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon to world leaders to act without hesitation in confronting the issue of climate change.

Climate change is anticipated to drastically change the world. In Southeast Asia, it is projected with high confidence that by the 2050s freshwater availability will decrease, that coastal areas will be at greatest risk due to increased flooding from the sea and rivers, that rapid urbanization, industrialization and economic development will compound the pressures on natural resources and the environment, and that floods and droughts will increase endemic morbidity and mortality due to diarrhoeal disease.

In the wake of this very grim picture painted by the Synthesis Report of the UN IPCC, this scenario appears to spell certain disaster for a developing country like the Philippines where millions still in live in poverty, without access to water and electricity, let alone food. To further complicate this dismal state of affairs, approximately 60% of Filipinos live in the coastal zone. With the country's coastline twice that of the US, majority of Filipinos depend chiefly on the sea for subsistence.

The Philippine government can reconcile its development agenda as contained in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan with measures to protect the people from the adverse effects of climate change.

In view of the urgency of the problem, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo created the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change (PTFCC), headed by the Department of Energy under the leadership of Secretary Angelo T. Reyes.

Adaptation strategies, on the other hand, focus on making climate-friendly technologies accessible to local communities in order to establish low-carbon infrastructure for transportation, energy, agriculture, industry and settlements. However, the prohibitive cost of developing alternative energy for commercial application poses a challenge for the cash-strapped government.

During the UN High-Level Meeting on Climate Change in September, Secretary Reyes stressed technology transfer and sharing, research and development, capacity-building, and collaborative partnerships with the private sector as tools to address climate change. He said that "the task force will facilitate the transfer of technology by pursuing bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements." In addition, they "would have to pursue financing mechanisms such as official development assistance funds, market-based incentives, subsidies to lower costs for power generation using solar, wind, and other clean technologies, and innovative lending schemes."

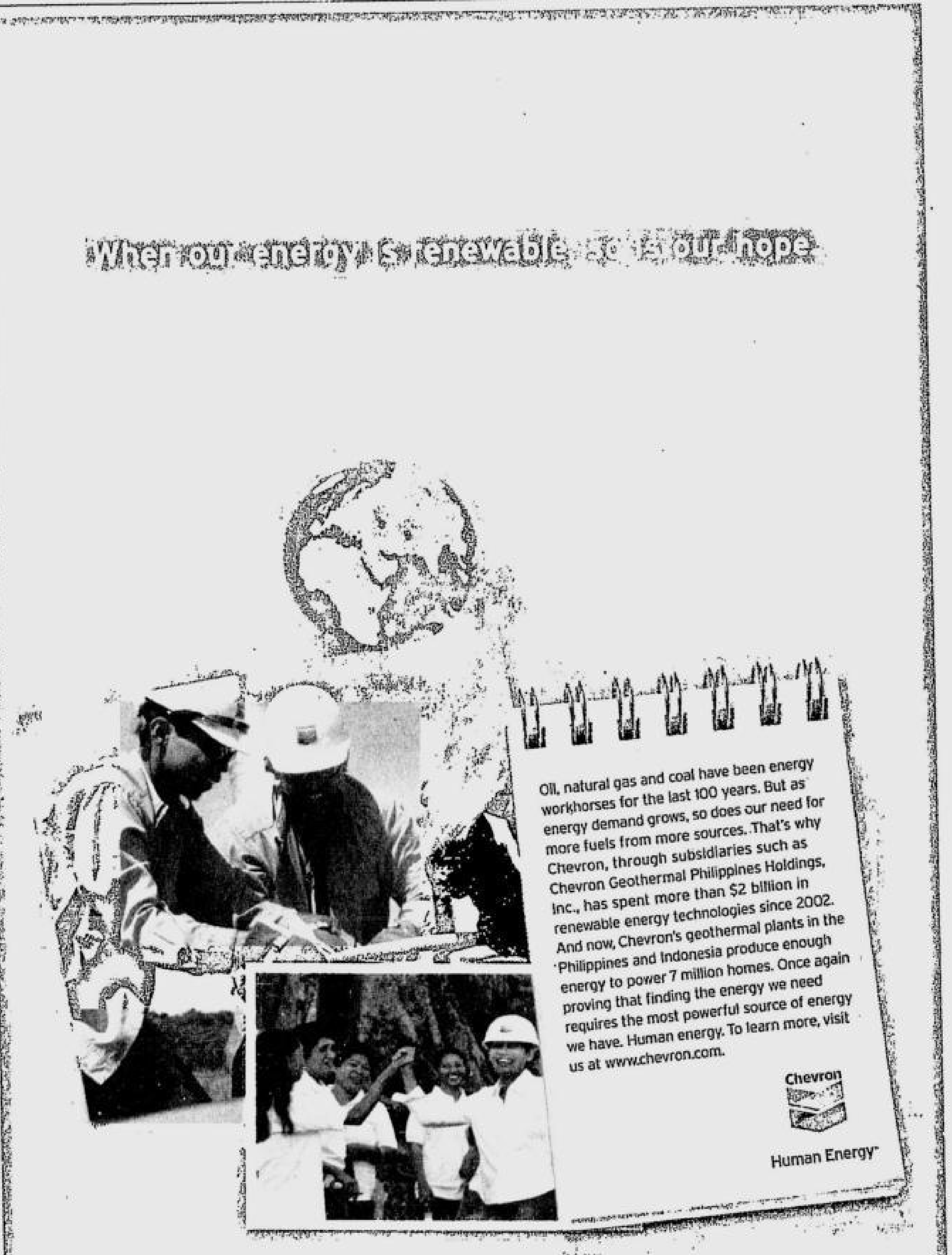
The PTFCC is actively implementing these measures since the country, as an archipelagic state located on the Pacific Rim, is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. As such, and as part of the adaptation strategy, the task force is also addressing the vulnerabilities of specific sectors and areas on disaster-prone settlements, high-risk population centers and food production areas.

The task force is engaged in mobilizing support and commitment from local government units, the private sector, academe, NGOs and other stakeholders to guarantee the success of the government's climate change initiatives.

The challenge posed by the IPCC report came out just weeks before the scheduled UN Conference on Climate Change in Bali, Indonesia in December. World leaders are expected to begin to discuss a global climate change treaty that will replace the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012.

The Philippines is a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Congress ratified the Protocol in 2003 and the latter in 1994. The country benefits from the Protocol through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) where industrialized countries pay for projects that reduce GHG emissions in developing countries.

One notable example is the NorthWind Bangui Bay Project in Ilocos Norte which is funded by the Danish International Development Agency. The windfarm project is expected to reduce GHG emissions by approximately 51,855 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually for the first 7-year crediting period from 2008-2012.



Oil, natural gas and coal have been energy workhorses for the last 100 years. But as energy demand grows, so does our need for more fuels from more sources. That's why Chevron, through subsidiaries such as Chevron Geothermal Philippines Holdings, Inc., has spent more than $2 billion in renewable energy technologies since 2002. And now, Chevron's geothermal plants in the Philippines and Indonesia produce enough energy to power 7 million homes. Once again proving that finding the energy we need requires the most powerful source of energy we have. Human energy. To learn more, visit us at www.chevron.com.

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Message

My warmest greetings to everyone!

In continuing global development efforts, energy will play a very important and major function in sustaining economic growth for accrued human capital development. Being the most dynamic region in the world today, much is expected to happen in the Asia-Pacific in the coming years.

In the next two decades, the energy requirement in the region will increase by 2.0 percent while actual energy production will expand by only 1.5 percent. Striking a favorable balance between the two is imperative in order to avert a potential power shortage. Reforms are underway to provide power to the widest coverage; affordable power to every Filipino.

Our Energy Independence Agenda is anchored on the energy sector goals of achieving 60 percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010 and the effective implementation of reforms in vital energy industries. These reforms will subsequently guide the Filipino consumers to make informed choices and expand their economic horizons in a milieu that will be free of distortions.

The DOE believes that access to energy is instrumental in actually eliminating poverty and promoting social equity. It is, perchance, an equalizer to the growing gap between the rich and poor. Furthermore, being able to provide energy is an empowering tool in aiding development.

We will lay down the foundation for the future generation of Filipinos to ensure that they will also benefit from the convenience and the comforts that we currently experience. It is in this regard, that we maintain and implement energy policies which have environment connections in affirmation of our commitment to sustainable development.

The challenge ahead is indeed colossal and for this reason, we remain steadfast in our commitment of providing the required policy and programmatic support mechanisms to ensure that energy facilities, products, and services are delivered adequately, ecologically safe, and at affordable means.

Consistent therefore with our over-arching theme: the Department of Energy with its attached agencies is all geared up, motivated and driven to fuel the Philippine economy through greater access to energy!

ANGELO T. REYES
Secretary
Department of Energy

More energy resource exploration needed to meet RP growing demand

The Department of Energy (DOE) is actively moving towards the goal of energy independence for the country.

DOE Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said that "our energy independence agenda is anchored on the energy sector goals of achieving 60 percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010 and the effective implementation of reforms in vital energy industries."

In 2004, locally sourced energy supply was at 54.5%. The country imports the remaining 45.5% for coal and oil. In the Philippine Energy Plan, the DOE plans to pursue the energy independence agenda through its effort to accelerate the exploration, development, and utilization of indigenous energy sources and to intensify the renewable energy resource development.

The targeted increase of indigenous energy sources is being done through competitive service contracting schemes. This is one way of attracting investors for exploration and development of the country's energy resources.

The DOE last initiated the Philippine Energy Contracting Round (PECR) in December 2006. Nine areas in Cagayan, Central Luzon, Mindoro-Cuyo, East Palawan, Visayan and Agusan-Davao were offered for the petroleum sector. For coal, 14 areas were offered with a total potential of 421 million metric tons (MMT) located in Quezon, Negros Occidental, Cebu, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Davao Oriental and Zamboanga Sibugay. For the geothermal sector, 3 areas were offered in Batangas, Biliran and Compostela Valley with a combined potential generation of about 100 megawatts. To date, service contracts for said areas have yet to be awarded by the DOE.

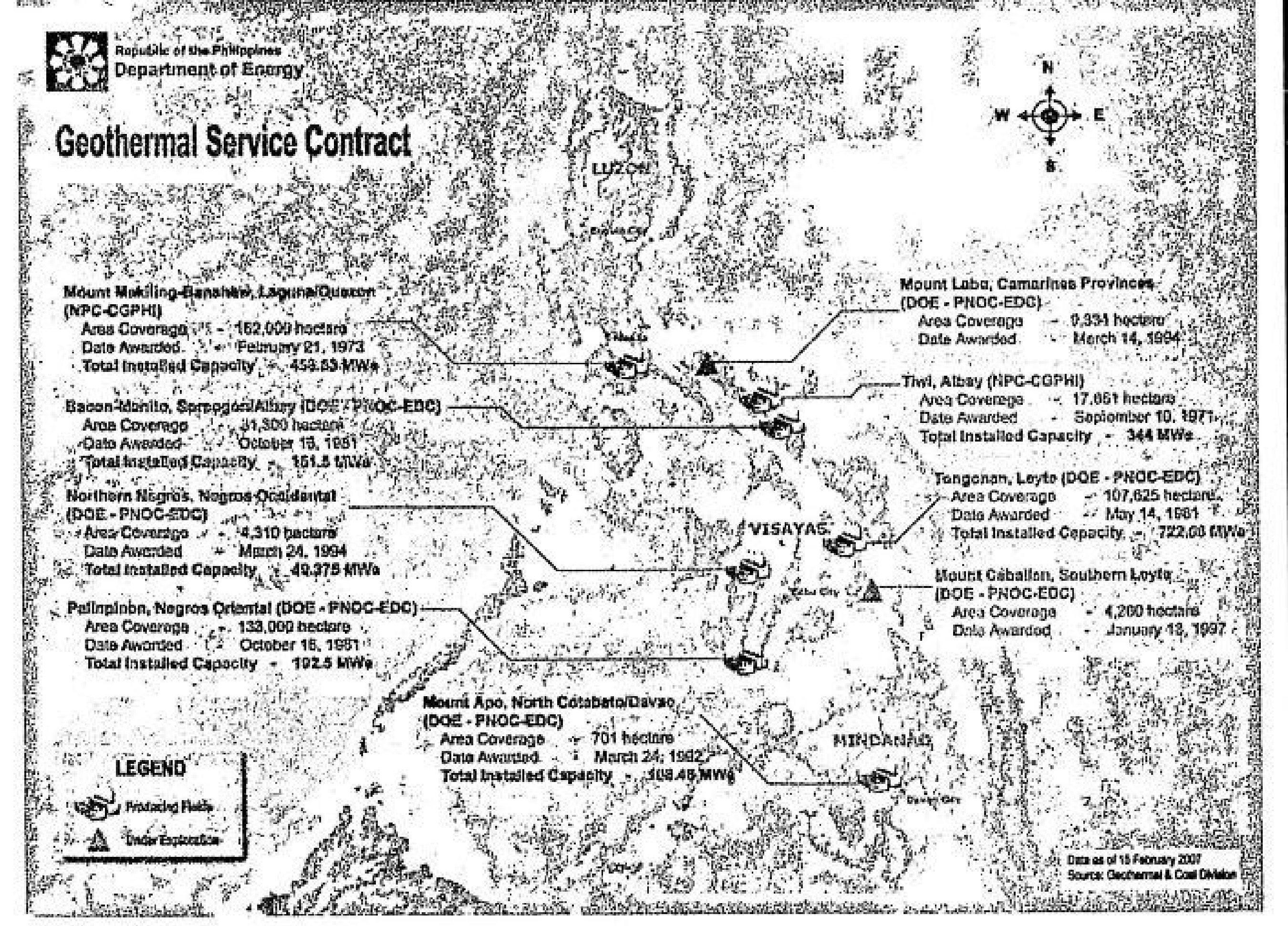
As of January 2007, there were 28 active service exploration contracts for the development of indigenous fossil fuel resources. The DOE plans to increase the country's oil and gas reserves by about 20% in ten years.

As of September 2007, there were 9 geothermal fields with a total installed capacity of 2,027.065 megawatt of electric energy (MWe). The department plans to be the world's largest producer of geothermal energy in the next ten years.

For coal, there are a total of 42 coal operating contracts with total production this year (until October) of 3,089,789.84 MMT. The DOE aims to reduce coal imports by 20% in ten years. The department also intends to adopt clean coal technologies to maximize the use of coal for power generation.

The DOE is fast tracking the country's indigenous energy resources in light of the volatility of the international oil market. Secretary Reyes is planning to launch another round of bidding before the year ends to explore and develop the country's energy resources. This will be the fourth PECR since 2004 when it was first inaugurated.

With the planned auctioning off of petroleum, coal and geothermal fields, the potential to increase production of indigenous energy resources also improves. Subsequently, the country will be a step closer towards achieving energy independence.


Republic of the Philippines
Department of Energy
Geothermal Service Contract
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LUZON
VISAYAS
MINDANAO
Mount Makiling-Banahaw, Laguna/Quezon (NPC-CGPHI)
Area Coverage - 162,000 hectare
Date Awarded - February 21, 1973
Total Installed Capacity - 458.53 MWe
Bacon-Manito, Sorsogon/Albay (DOE - PNOC-EDC)
Area Coverage - 81,300 hectare
Date Awarded - October 13, 1981
Total Installed Capacity - 151.5 MWe
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Area Coverage - 4,310 hectare
Date Awarded - March 24, 1994
Total Installed Capacity - 49.375 MWe
Palinpinon, Negros Oriental (DOE - PNOC-EDC)
Area Coverage - 133,000 hectare
Date Awarded - October 16, 1981
Total Installed Capacity - 192.5 MWe
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Area Coverage - 701 hectare
Date Awarded - March 24, 1992
Total Installed Capacity - 108.48 MWe
Mount Labo, Camarines Provinces (DOE - PNOC-EDC)
Area Coverage - 9,331 hectare
Date Awarded - March 14, 1994
Tiwi, Albay (NPC-CGPHI)
Area Coverage - 17,061 hectare
Date Awarded - September 10, 1971
Total Installed Capacity - 344 MWe
Tongonan, Leyte (DOE - PNOC-EDC)
Area Coverage - 107,625 hectare
Date Awarded - May 14, 1981
Total Installed Capacity - 722.68 MWe
Mount Cabalian, Southern Leyte (DOE - PNOC-EDC)
Area Coverage - 4,200 hectare
Date Awarded - January 13, 1997
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Producing Fields
Under Exploration

Data as of 15 February 2007
Source: Geothermal & Coal Division

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ENERGY SECTOR MILESTONES: Three Decades in the Making

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Masinloc, the country's third oil field started commercial production.

1983
The Tongonan and Palinpinon geothermal power plants were commissioned as a product of the joint efforts of the all-Filipino staff of PNOC and NPC.

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The Office of the Energy Affairs replaced the Ministry of Energy with the promulgation of EO 193. EO 172 created Energy Regulatory Board. EO 215 was signed allowing the investors from private sector to participate in power generation.

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Malampaya was discovered by SPEX.

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The build-operate-transfer (BOT) model was introduced which allows for the construction of capital intensive projects at no cost to the government.

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RA 7638 which provides that the DOE shall devise ways of giving royalties to local host communities of power projects in the provinces was passed.

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Executive Order 264 was signed, providing the reduction of bituminous coal tariff from 20 percent to 10 percent in 1997, three percent in 2000.

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RA 8184 or the Oil Tax Restructuring Bill was signed to restructure the excise taxes on petroleum products.

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Launching of the "Window of Opportunity" which is a special package for foreign and local investors in petroleum exploration and development in the country.

1998
Implementation of RA 8479 or the Downstream Oil Industry Act of 1998. O-Ilaw project was launched, aimed at electrifying 100 percent of all barangays in the country by 2006.

1999
Passage of RA 8749 or the Philippine Clean Air Act of 1999 wherein DOE will be one of the implementing agencies.

2000
Establishment of a "Corridor of Focus", an investment package under the "Window of Opportunity" which is composed of more prospective areas near the Malampaya gas infrastructure or the path of the future Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline.

2001
The passage of the Republic Act 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act. The inauguration of the Malampaya Deep-Water-Gas-To-Power project, signaling the birth of the country's natural gas industry.

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The full commercial operation of the Malampaya natural gas downstream oil sector. The Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC) endorsed to President Arroyo the implementing rules and regulations (IRRs) of the Republic Act No. 9136 or Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA). The 1,500 MW Ilijan natural gas project went on full commercial operation.

2003
Executive Order No. 290 has been signed Implementing the Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport.

2006
The passage of the Biofuels Act of 2006

2007
The successful bidding of the Calaca Coal Fired Plant, and PNOC-EDC have made a positive mark with the government's privatization efforts.

The DOE Family

The Department of Energy (DOE) is commemorating its 35th year of existence on the 21st of December this year. During all these years of public service, the department has prepared and managed all plans and programs of the government relative to energy exploration, development, utilization, distribution and conservation.

At the helm of the DOE organization is Secretary Angelo T. Reyes. The Office of the Secretary is charged with the responsibility of establishing plans, policies, programs and standards for the effective, efficient and economic operation of the DOE and its attached agencies. It exercises direct supervision and control over all functions and activities.

Sec. Reyes has made the attainment of energy self-sufficiency as well as the lowering of power rates in the country his main priorities. This two-fold agenda is being done by developing the country's indigenous and renewable sources of energy.

Supporting Sec. Reyes in fulfilling the department's mandate is a team of professional and competent individuals all geared towards providing efficient service to the Filipino people.

There are currently five undersecretaries, namely, Undersecretaries Melinda L. Ocampo, Mariano L. Salazar, Francisco G. Delfin Jr., Ramon Santos and Roy Kyamko. The undersecretaries advise and assist Sec Reyes in the formulation and implementation of specific plans, programs, policies and standards under their supervision.

Usec. Ocampo supervises the Electric Power Industry Management Bureau (EPIMB), the Information Technology and Management Services, the Investments Promotion Office and the Consumer Welfare and Promotion Staff.

Usec. Salazar oversees the Oil Industry Management Bureau (OIMB), the Energy Utilization Management Bureau (EUMB), the Energy Research and Testing Laboratory Services, and the Natural Gas Office.

Usec. Delfin administers the Energy Resource Development Bureau (ERDB), the Energy Policy and Planning Bureau (EPPB), and the Administrative, Financial and Legal Services.

Usec. Santos is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the biofuels law. Usec Kyamko, on the other hand, is in charge of the Presidential Task Force on Anti-Kotong and Anti-Kolorum. He is also the Executive Director of the Presidential Task Force on the Security of Energy Facilities and Enforcement of Energy Laws.

Assistant Secretary Matanog M. Mapandi assists Sec. Reyes and the undersecretaries on the promulgation of energy rules and regulations and coordinates the functions and activities of the bureaus, services and units.

Assistant Secretary Leonilo B. Lariosa manages the Visayas field office, while Assistant Secretary Annette Rafael-Manansala is Head Executive Assistant to the Secretary.

The bureaus which are in the third tier of the department's organizational hierarchy handle specific operations and programs of the department. The ERDB, headed by Director Ramon Oca, formulates and implements government initiatives relating to the exploration, development and production of indigenous petroleum, coal and geothermal energy resources and its product and market development.

The EPPB, under Dir. Lilian C. Fernandez, monitors, evaluates, formulates and updates national and local energy plans, provides a comprehensive assessment of demand scenarios and supply options, and studies the impacts of international commitment on energy policies, economy and environment.

The OIMB, under Dir. Zenaida Y. Monsada, handles all downstream oil industry concerns such as oil statistics, oil price monitoring, oil industry standards and monitoring, and retail market monitoring.

The EUMB, headed by Dir. Mario C. Marasigan, is in charge of the government's renewable energy program as well as the development of alternative fuels and the promotion energy efficiency and conservation.

The EPIMB, under Directors Mylene C. Capongcol and Irma Exconde supervise the implementation of electric power industry restructuring to establish a competitive, market-based environment and encourage private sector participation. It also oversees the implementation of the rural electrification program and the ER 1-94 or Benefits to Host Communities Program.

The ERTLS, under Director Raquel S. Huliganga is in-charge of the Geochemical Research and Testing Laboratory as well as the lighting and appliance testing laboratory.

Director Criselda Funelas heads the legal department while Director Manuel M. Llaneza oversees the Mindanao field office. Director Loreta G. Ayson supervises Administrative Services.

Atty. Teresa Rupicio is the Executive Assistant to the Secretary of Energy.

This brief overview of the offices comprising the DOE organization illustrates what the department is doing to perform its mandate as provided for in RA 7638 or the Department of Energy Act of 1992. The members of the DOE family perform their tasks with utmost integrity and professionalism that will ultimately contribute to fulfilling the department's mission and commitment to improve the quality of life of the Filipino by ensuring a sustainable, stable, secure, sufficient, accessible and reasonably-priced energy.

Message

My warmest greetings to everyone!

In continuing global development efforts, energy will play a very important and major function in sustaining economic growth for accrued human capital development. Being the most dynamic region in the world today, much is expected to happen in the Asia-Pacific in the coming years.

In the next two decades, the energy requirement in the region will increase by 2.0 percent while actual energy production will expand by only 1.5 percent. Striking a favorable balance between the two is imperative in order to avert a potential power shortage. Reforms are underway to provide power to the widest coverage; affordable power to every Filipino.

Our Energy Independence Agenda is anchored on the energy sector goals of achieving 60 percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010 and the effective implementation of reforms in vital energy industries. These reforms will subsequently guide the Filipino consumers to make informed choices and expand their economic horizons in a milieu that will be free of distortions.

The DOE believes that access to energy is instrumental in actually eliminating poverty and promoting social equity. It is, perchance, an equalizer to the growing gap between the rich and poor. Furthermore, being able to provide energy is an empowering tool in aiding development.

We will lay down the foundation for the future generation of Filipinos to ensure that they will also benefit from the convenience and the comforts that we currently experience. It is in this regard, that we maintain and implement energy policies which have environment connections in affirmation of our commitment to sustainable development.

The challenge ahead is indeed colossal and for this reason, we remain steadfast in our commitment of providing the required policy and programmatic support mechanisms to ensure that energy facilities, products, and services are delivered adequately, ecologically safe, and at affordable means.

Consistent therefore with our over-arching theme: the Department of Energy with its attached agencies is all geared up, motivated and driven to fuel the Philippine economy through greater access to energy!

ANGELO T. REYES
Secretary
Department of Energy

DEPARTMENT OF EN

More energy resource exploration needed to meet RP growing demand

The Department of Energy (DOE) is actively moving towards the goal of energy independence for the country.

DOE Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said that "our energy independence agenda is anchored on the energy sector goals of achieving 60 percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010 and the effective implementation of reforms in vital energy industries."

In 2004, locally sourced energy supply was at 54.5%. The country imports the remaining 45.5% for coal and oil. In the Philippine Energy Plan, the DOE plans to pursue the energy independence agenda through its effort to accelerate the exploration, development, and utilization of indigenous energy sources and to intensify the renewable energy resource development.

The targeted increase of indigenous energy sources is being done through competitive service contracting schemes. This is one way of attracting investors for exploration and development of the country's energy resources.

The DOE last initiated the Philippine Energy Contracting Round (PECR) in December 2006. Nine areas in Cagayan, Central Luzon, Mindoro-Cuyo, East Palawan, Visayan and Agusan-Davao were offered for the petroleum sector. For coal, 14 areas were offered with a total potential of 421 million metric tons (MMT) located in Quezon, Negros Occidental, Cebu, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur, Davao Oriental and Zamboanga Sibugay. For the geothermal sector, 3 areas were offered in Batangas, Biliran and Compostela Valley with a combined potential generation of about 100 megawatts. To date, service contracts for said areas have yet to be awarded by the DOE.

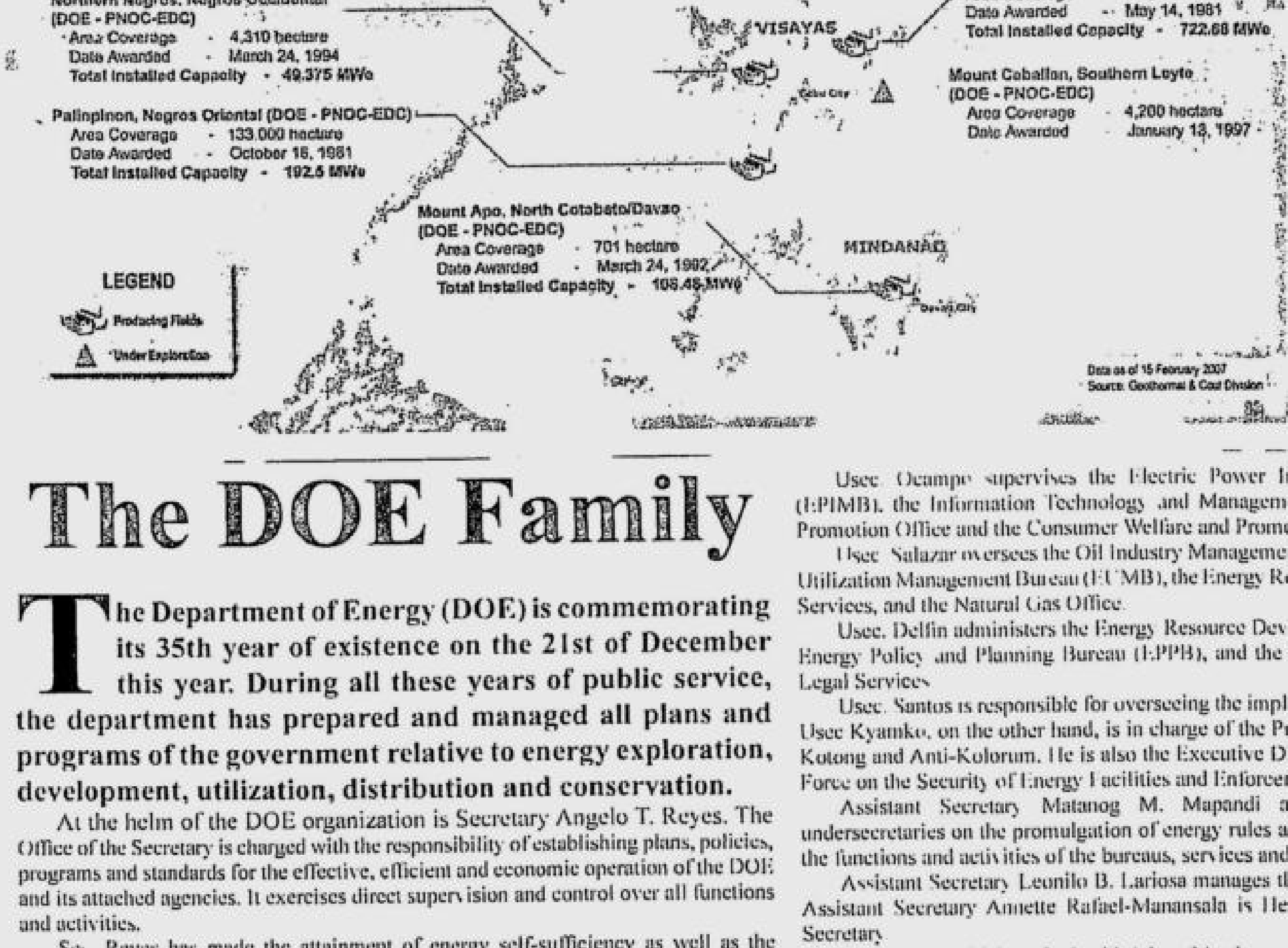
As of January 2007, there were 28 active service exploration contracts for the development of indigenous fossil fuel resources. The DOE plans to increase the country's oil and gas reserves by about 20% in ten years.

As of September 2007, there were 9 geothermal fields with a total installed capacity of 2,027.065 megawatt of electric energy (MWe). The department plans to be the world's largest producer of geothermal energy in the next ten years.

For coal, there are a total of 42 coal operating contracts with total production this year (until October) of 3,089,789.84 MMT. The DOE aims to reduce coal imports by 20% in ten years. The department also intends to adopt clean coal technologies to maximize the use of coal for power generation.

The DOE is fast tracking the country's indigenous energy resources in light of the volatility of the international oil market. Secretary Reyes is planning to launch another round of bidding before the year ends to explore and develop the country's energy resources. This will be the fourth PECR since 2004 when it was first inaugurated.

With the planned auctioning off of petroleum, coal and geothermal fields, the potential to increase production of indigenous energy resources also improves. Subsequently, the country will be a step closer towards achieving energy independence.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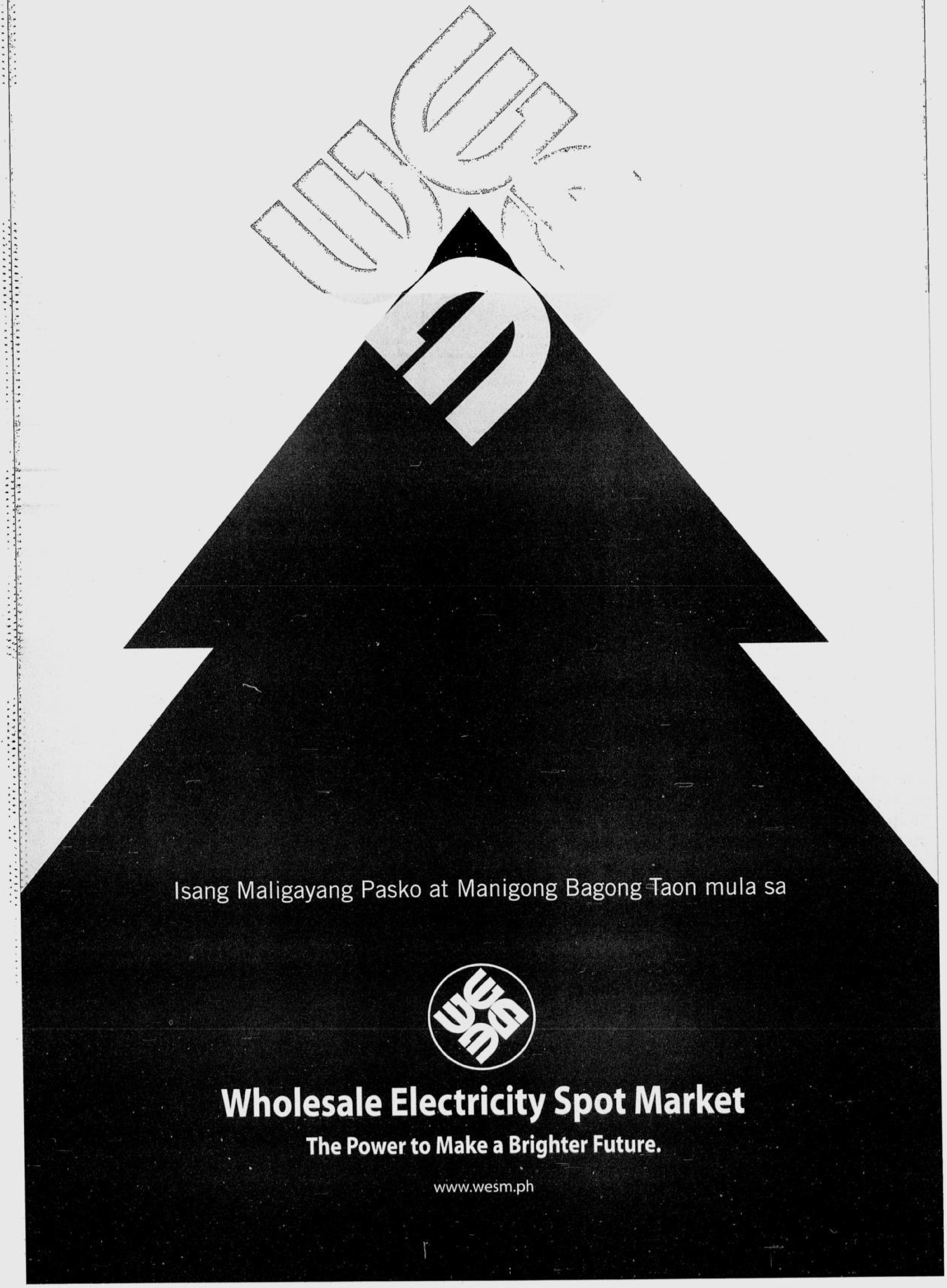
Ngayong pasko, hangad namin para sa inyo ang lahat ng kasiyahan, lubos na kapayapaan at mas maliwanag na kinabukasan.



Isang Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon mula sa

Wholesale Electricity Spot Market

The Power to Make a Brighter Future.

www.wesm.ph

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

National Energy Consciousness Month
(17 Dec -21 Dec 2007)
Theme: Fuelling Philippine Development Through
Greater Access to Clean Energy

17 December 2007

2007 OPENING CEREMONIES
Venue: DOE Sunken Parking Lot
Time: 08:00 AM

Awarding of cheques under ER 1-94- ER 1-94 stipulates that direct benefits be given to LGUs hosting energy generating facilities. This ceremony will be a document of the DOE's dedication to support communities in the vicinity of energy generating facilities.

Time: 09:35-09:50 AM
VENUE: DOE-AVR

Initial Presentation of the Signature Campaign-This campaign will center on DOE's campaign for more development in the Renewable Energy (RE) arena.

Time: 09:50-10:50 AM
VENUE: DOE-AVR

Replacement of Incandescent Bulbs- This ceremony is to underscore the agency's commitment to energy efficiency.

VENUE: DOE Sunken Parking Lot
Time: 10:05-10:15 AM

Training on Basic Electricity and Photovoltaic (PV) Systems – This training will center on electricity which is sourced from solar power technology.

VENUE: Dipolog City
Time: 08:00 AM – 05:00 PM

18 December 2007

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACTIVITIES – To highlight the DOE's commitment in serving the marginalized, the agency will visit cancer patients at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH). A visit to the Home for the Aged will be done as well.

VENUE: PGH Manila and Heart of Mary Villa

Launching of ENERGTEK'S Adsorbed Natural Gas (ANG) Technology - ANG will launch the use of ANG in three-wheeled vehicles in the Philippines. ANG is known to be more environmental than conventional gasoline or diesel-powered vehicles. ANG is natural gas stored at lower pressure than compressed natural gas (CNG).

VENUE: Blue Leaf, Global City, Fort Bonifacio
Time: 08:00-09:00 AM

Seminar on Energy Safety and Efficiency Measures – The DOE will sponsor a seminar on energy safety and efficiency measures to ensure an energy efficient household.

VENUE: Department of National Defense (DND)
Time: 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM

Consumer Empowerment Seminar on LPG and Liquid Petroleum Products – In the broadening use of LPG and Liquid Petrol products, a seminar is in order to educate the citizens on its proper use and safety.

VENUE: Cagayan de Oro City
Time: 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM

25th Don Emilio Abello Energy Efficiency Awards – In commemoration of Don Emilio Abello, three-time Executive Secretary and Assemblyman and former MERALCO CEO/ Chairman, this award recognizes agencies and establishments with outstanding performance in energy conservation and efficiency in government, business, and industrial sectors.

VENUE: DOE-AVR
Time: 03:00 to 06:00 PM

19 December 2007

BLOODLETTING- Giving blood is a gift of life. The DOE employees will donate blood to complement the annual demand for blood donors.

VENUE: DOE Covered Court and National Power Corporation's (NPC)
Time: 08:00 AM to 12:00 NN

Bike for a Cause- To emphasize the DOE's commitment to clean energy, a bike marathon will be initiated to demonstrate the healthy rewards of biking.

VENUE: DOE, Fort Bonifacio
Time: 09:00 AM

IEC on energy Utilization and the Downstream Oil Industry- Information, Education, and Communication campaigns will be made to educate consumers on downstream sector includes oil refineries, petrochemical plants, petroleum product distribution, retail outlets, and the natural gas distribution.

VENUE: Sugbu, South Reclamation Project (SRP)
Time: 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM

Investment Forum- In its continued quest for private sector intervention in its privatization efforts, the DOE will sponsor a forum to respond to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about investing in the energy sector.

VENUE: Renaissance Hotel
Time: 01:00 PM to 05:00 PM

20 December 2007

ON-THE-SPOT POSTER MAKING CONTEST- The DOE will sponsor a Poster Making Contest for high school students to make known the advocacies it espouses.

VENUE: DOE-AVR
Time: 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM

Launching of LPG Certified Establishment Program- With LPG garnering broader use in a variety of uses, the DOE will launch the LPG Certified Establishment (CE) Program. This program is designed to promote and foster the highest level of business ethics in the LPG industry.

VENUE: DOE Compound
Time: 08:00 AM

National Biofuels Industry Consultation- With the passage of the Biofuels Act of 2006, the DOE is looking into alternative fuels to lessen the country's dependency on imported petroleum and petrol products.

VENUE: Asian Institute of Management (AIM), Makati
Time: 08:00 AM

DOE Children's Party- The DOE will sponsor a children's party for the employees' children.
VENUE: Sunken Garden Parking Lot
Time: 09:00 AM to 12:00 NN

21 December 2007

DOE 35th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION- The DOE will be celebrating its
35th Anniversary celebration to be presided by Secretary Angelo T. Reyes

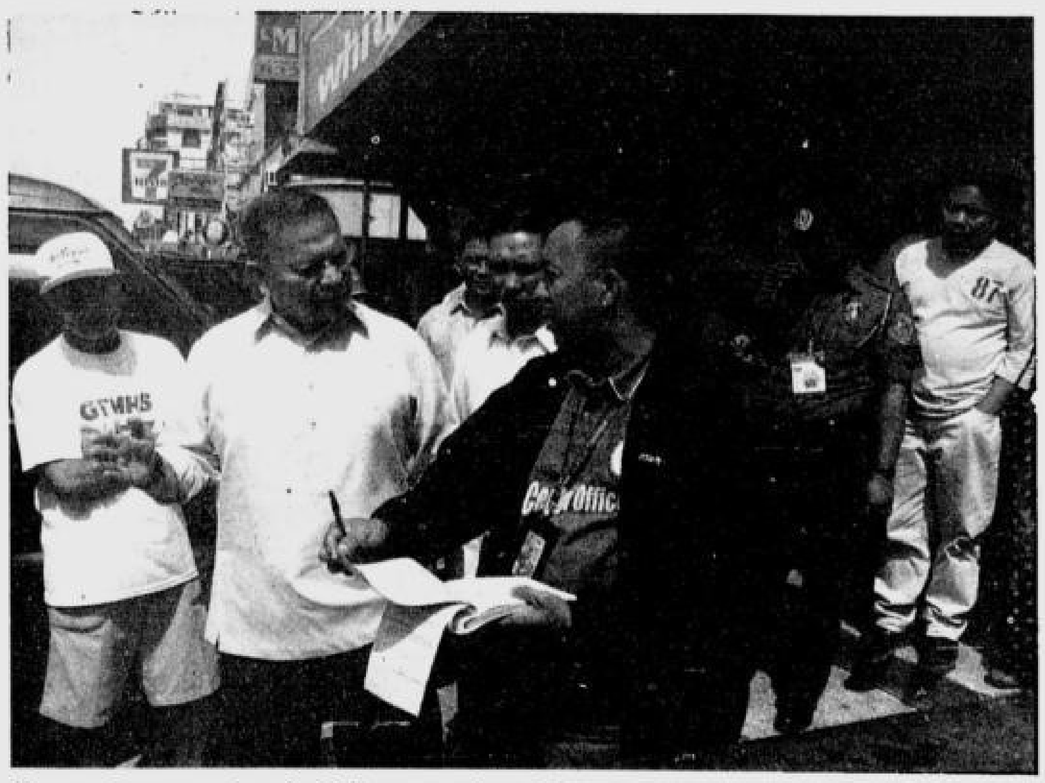
VENUE: DOE Sunken Parking Lot
Time: 08:00 AM

Soft Launch on Goniophotometer Testing Facility- The 200 square meter Goniophotometer facility will be the first luminaire test facility to be set up in Southeast Asian Region and most expensive yet under Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Project (PELMATP).

VENUE: DOE Compound
Time: 09:00 AM

DOE 35th Anniversary cum General Assembly and Christmas Party

VENUE: PNOC Tennis Covered Court
Time: 01:30 PM



Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes confers with a Land Transportation Office operative about the PTF-KKK operations in the vicinity of Baclaran, Parañaque City, and identified hotbed of "kolorum" vehicles, where the taskforce members apprehended violation.

Reyes heads Presidential Task Force on Kontra 'Kotong' at 'Kolorum'

Kolorum vehicles are vehicles which do not have the mandatory papers to operate legitimately as PUVs. As such, they do not pay the proper taxes and do not have the insurance policy to protect their passengers in case of accidents.

On 23 November 2007, President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo created the Presidential Task Force on Kontra Kotong at Kolorum to essentially rid the streets of kolorum vehicles and their protectors.

Energy Secretary, Angelo T. Reyes, was named the Chairman of the steering committee, while retired Army Lt General and current DOE Undersecretary Roy Kyamko will head the Task Force.

Five agencies have been identified to work closely with the Department of Energy, namely, the Philippine National Police (PNP)-NCR, Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Armed Forces National Capital Region Command (NCRCom/AFP), Land Transportation Office (LTO), and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

In the task force's first round of operations on 26 November 2007, 48 vehicles of various types and makes were rounded up for confiscation.

The Presidential Task Force on Kontra Kotong at Kolorum (PTF-KKK) is also task to mitigate any transport fare hike and prevent the proliferation of kolorum vehicles and mulcting.

Secretary Reyes emphasized that the Task Force is a social maneuver to assist legitimate drivers to recoup the losses they have incurred due to these malefactors.

The transport sector has disclosed their consternation against these Kolorum vehicles because they usually lose P7,000 monthly income to the illegal vehicles and corrupt cops.

There are about 557,000 kolorum jeepneys, vans, and buses nationwide plying different routes. Approximately 50,000 of this number operate in Metro Manila. The Task Force has until December 15 to complete its operations.

When it Comes to Alternative and Renewable Energy, Guess Who's Leading the Way?

We're called the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC). However, we're not just an oil company. We realize that alternative and renewable energy is the energy of tomorrow. This energy is clean, environment-friendly, abundant.

So we're into solar power. We're into wind energy. We're into hydropower. We're into natural gas and natural gas vehicles. We're also into biofuels.

PNOC is in the battle for the nation's energy security. And we're waging this war for the Filipino.

PNOC
The Energy Company

PNOC Bldg VI, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel: (632) 812-6209 www.pnoc.com.ph

DECEMBER IS NATIONAL ENERGY CONSCIOUSNESS MONTH

INIT O ILAW?

Sa Compact Flourescent Lamp (CFL) ang binabayaran mo ay liwanag.

HUWAG SAYANGIN ANG KURYENTE! HINDI ITO LIBRE!

1. Hanggat maaari, gumamit ng fluorescent lamp o Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL)
2. Ang incandescent bulb ay lumilikha ng INIT kesa LIWANAG mula sa halos 80 porsiyento ng kuryenteng ginagamit nito.
3. Maaaring mas mura ang incandescent bulb pero mas makakatipid sa CFL sa mga kadahilanang:
   a. mas tumatagal ang CFL mula 5 hanggang 10 beses kaysa incandescent bulb, mas matagal ang pagpalit ng ilaw.
   b. ang kuryenteng ginagamit ng CFL ay sa liwanag napupunta kesa sa init na karaniwang nangyayari sa incandescent bulb.
   c. 70-80% na kuryente ay natitipid sa CFL. Ang 50 watts na incandescent bulb ay katumbas lamang ng 11 watts na CFL. Dahil dito mas matipid ang pang araw-araw na gamit.
4. Palagiang linisin ang fluorescent tube. Ang dumi o alikabok ay nakababawas ng liwanag hanggang 50 porsiyento.

Brand Name:
Model/Type:
Wattage Rating:
Lamp Specifications *
Light Output 900 lumens
Power Consumption 15 watts
Efficacy 60 lumens per watts
Average Life 8,000 hours
For lamps of similar light output, higher efficacy means more energy savings

Sa pagbili ng CFL, siguraduhing may tatak na tulad nito para tiyak ang kalidad ng produkto.

Electricity Conservation: A Response to Climate Change

ec way of life
energy conservation

Para sa karagdagang kaalaman o tanong: 840-2287
Trunkline: 840-1401 to 214 local 329
Text your suggestions, comments, and complaints.
Just type DOE <space><message> and then send to 2920
(for Globe and Smart Subscribers only)

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
www.doe.gov.ph

December is National Energy Consciousness Month

More communities benefit from ER 1-94

In the remote municipality of Valencia in Negros Oriental, the lives of people have changed. The electrification of the town has given them opportunities to improve quality of life, greater access to basic services, and better infrastructure for rural development.

The electrification of the municipality was realized through the mechanisms provided for in ER 1-94, better known as Benefits to Host Communities. The policy objective of this particular energy regulation is to recognize and provide recompense for the contribution made by the local government unit or region that hosts the energy resource or the energy-generating facility.

Energy Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said this will "undoubtedly help accelerate economic activity in the countryside and help improve the lives of our countrymen residing in rural areas."

The nature of the benefits is the allocation of one centavo per kilowatt-hour of the electricity sales of generation facilities and/or energy resource development projects located in barangays, municipalities, cities, provinces and regions.

The monetary benefit is allocated into three separate funds – Electrification Fund (EF), Development and Livelihood Fund (DLF), and Reforestation, Watershed Management, Health and Environment Enhancement Fund (RWMHEEF).

The barangay electrification level in 1998 stood at only 76.9%. This was notably increased by 2007 as a result of several programs spearheaded by the Department of Energy aimed at achieving total electrification of the country. As of September 2007, the national electrification level stood at 95.76% (40,198 out of 41,980 barangays based on the 2005 census). Luzon has the most number of electrified barangays, followed by Visayas and then Mindanao.

Apart from electrification projects, host communities also benefit from the DLF and the RWMHEEF through projects such as streetlighting, construction of farm-to-market roads, development of sanitary landfill, procurement of medical equipment, establishment of livestock and poultry production and formation of community-based forestry management.

Any member of the community can apply to avail of the funds needed for these and numerous other projects, as long as it is proven that the project can be sustained and that it brings greater benefits to the greater number of people. The process involves the submission of a detailed project proposal to DOE, after it has been duly endorsed and reviewed by the generation company or energy resource developer and supported by the required documentation. Subsequently, a memorandum of agreement will be signed to effect funds commitment and project implementation.

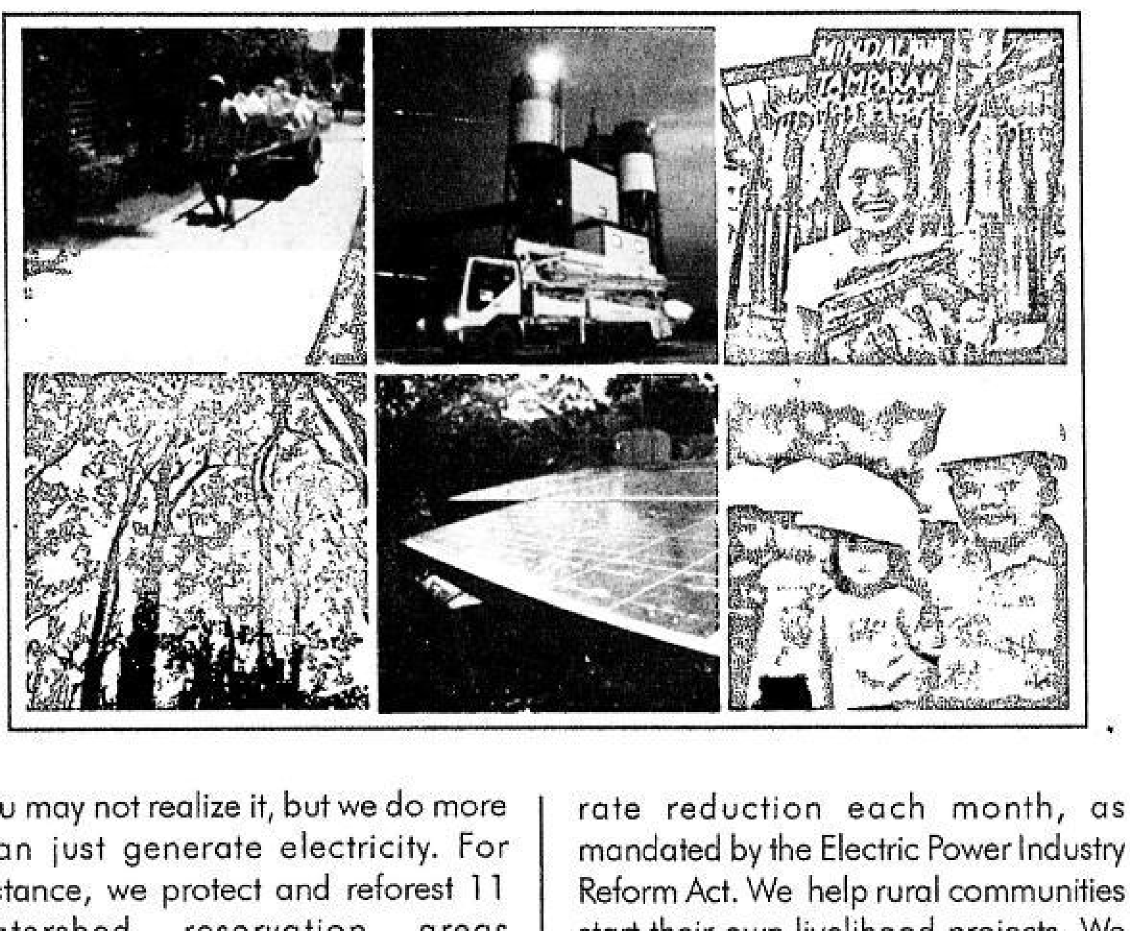
As of 15 November 2007, there were a total of 1,361 electrification projects (worth P1.14 billion), 878 development and livelihood projects (P660 million), and 813 RWMHEE projects (P860 million). 11 more projects are in the offing, ranging from road development projects and solid waste management to construction of a skills training facility.

Through ER 1-94, gains are being realized at uplifting the living conditions of people in the host communities. With electric power, they can put up businesses like sari-sari stores and expand educational tools. With development and livelihood projects, they can acquire the skills needed to earn a living and expand opportunities for economic integration with other communities. With RWMHEE projects, they can contribute to the protection of the environment while at the same time pursue economic development initiatives.

ER 1-94 is an excellent mechanism in bringing together the various stakeholders - local communities, LGUs, the private sector, and national government in support of government's effort to alleviate poverty. It is a collaboration that delivers direct results to communities that host the national wealth.

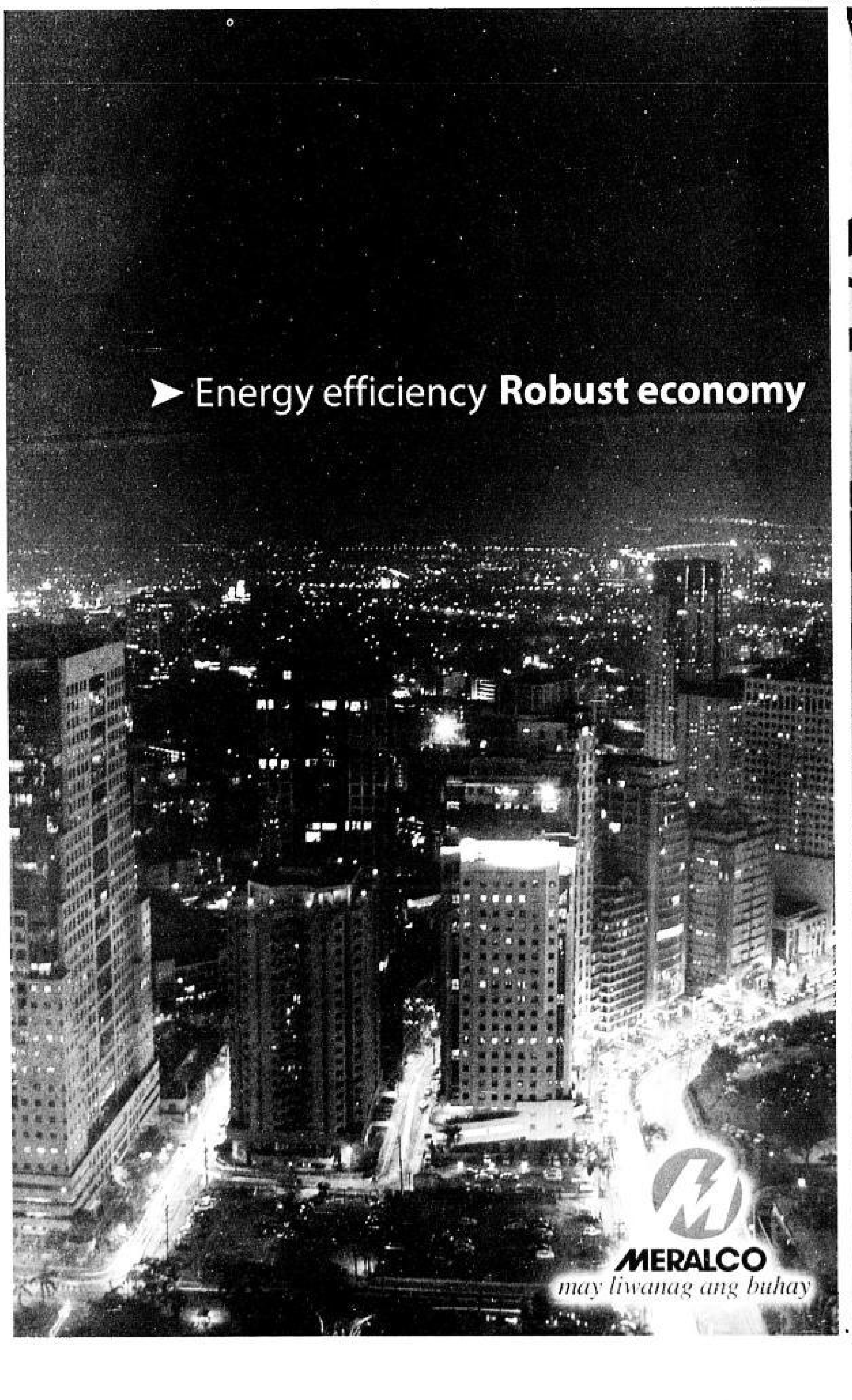
"We will not only be leading the energy industry in providing adequate, affordable, and, reliable energy to power our daily needs, but we will also be extending our social responsibility initiatives to help realize national development objectives," Sec. Reyes said.

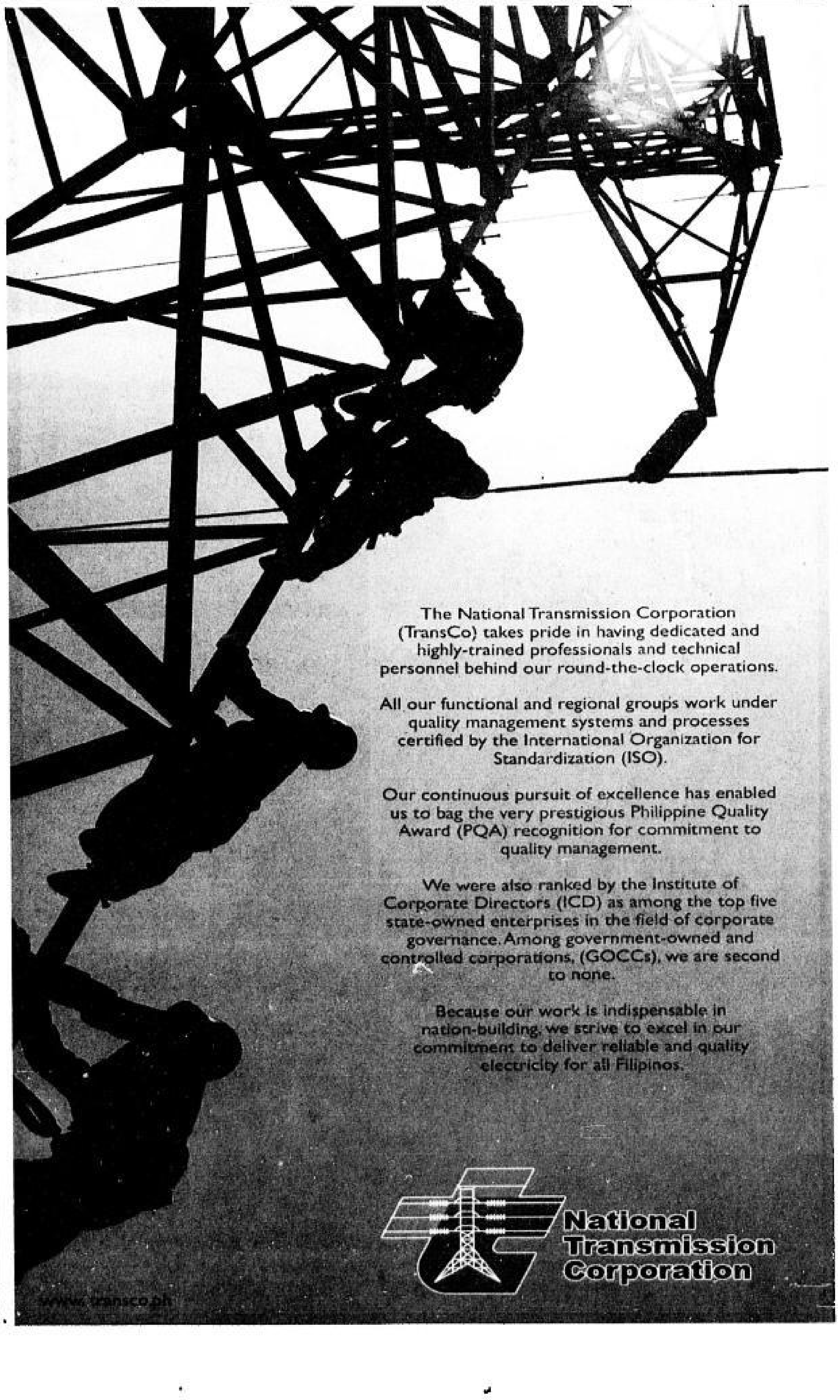
NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION • 1936 •
NATIONAL POWER
YOUR PARTNER



You may not realize it, but we do more than just generate electricity. For instance, we protect and reforest 11 watershed reservation areas throughout the country. We help put up streetlights and schoolbuildings, and we build roads and bridges. We also light up far-flung islands and remote interior barangays. We give you a 30-centavo per kilowatt-hour rate reduction each month, as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act. We help rural communities start their own livelihood projects. We bring them medical supplies and construct health centers for them. And we do all of these out of a deep sense of commitment to you. Because we don't just power your homes and the industries that fuel our economy.

WE EMPOWER YOU.





The National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) takes pride in having dedicated and highly-trained professionals and technical personnel behind our round-the-clock operations.

All our functional and regional groups work under quality management systems and processes certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Our continuous pursuit of excellence has enabled us to bag the very prestigious Philippine Quality Award (PQA) recognition for commitment to quality management.

We were also ranked by the Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) as among the top five state-owned enterprises in the field of corporate governance. Among government-owned and controlled corporations, (GOCCs), we are second to none.

Because our work is indispensable in nation-building, we strive to excel in our commitment to deliver reliable and quality electricity for all Filipinos.

National Transmission Corporation
www.transco.ph

Quality & Energy Labels

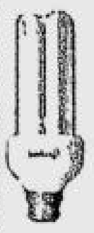
Brand Name :
Model/Type :
Wattage Rating :

*Lamp Specifications **

Light Output	**900** lumens
Power Consumption	**15** watts
Efficacy	**60** lumens per watts
Average Life	**8,000**** hours

For lamps of similar light output, higher efficacy means more energy savings

*when tested at standardized conditions
**rated average life at 50% failure



CFL

CERTIFIED Product Quality
Philippine Standard Mark (PS Mark)

QUALITY MARK
Import Commodity Clearance Mark (ICC Mark)

Brand Name	: LAMPS	EFFICACY*
Model/Type	: Brightest	60
Light output, lumens	: 2160	
Wattage rating, watts	: 36	lumens per watt

*based on standard test conditions

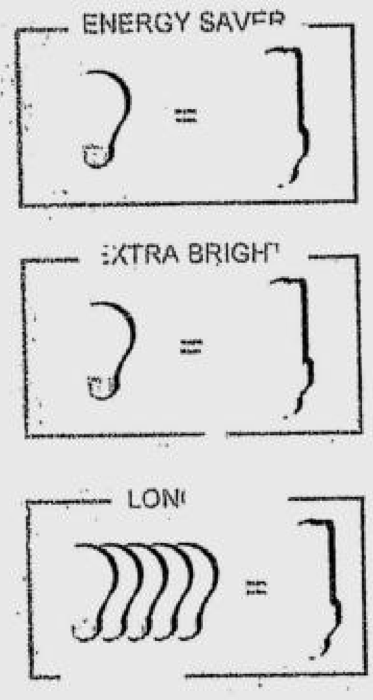
0512-345678

Important : For lamps with same wattage rating, HIGHER EFFICACY means MORE ENERGY SAVIMNGS

Linear fluorescent lamp
"Efficient lighting for a brighter tomorrow"

Know the difference

Incandescent bulb vs. CFL



50 Watts, uses more electricity

11 Watts uses less electricity

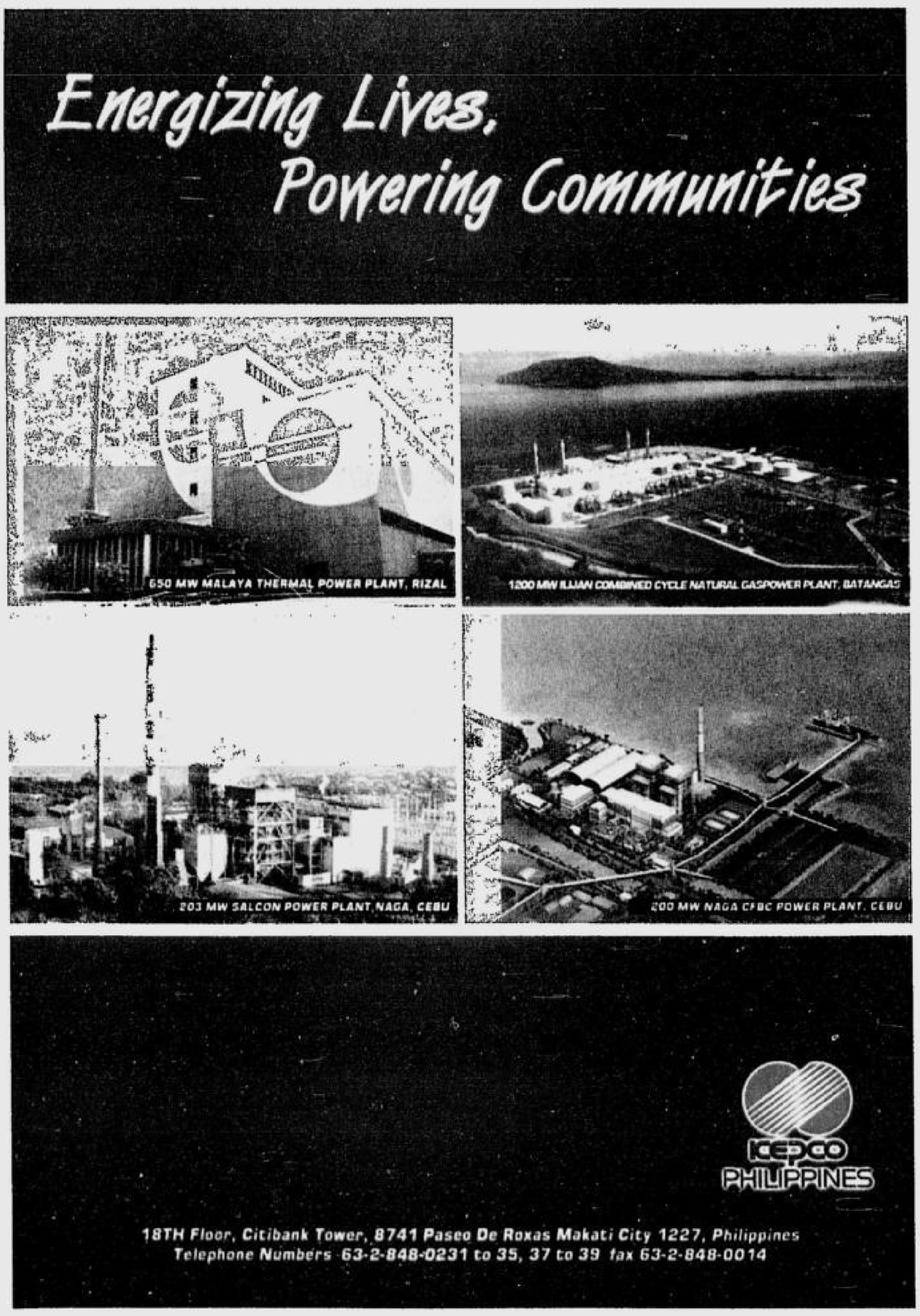
520 lumens, yellow color

580 lumens, white color

750-1,000 hours, won't last a year

4,000-6,000 hours

"Efficient lighting fo: ighte rr


Energizing Lives,
Powering Communities
650 MW MALAYA THERMAL POWER PLANT, RIZAL
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DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

LIST OF PNS-COMPLIANT COMPACT FLUORESCENT LAMPS (CFL)

As of 30 August 2007

Item No.	Wattage Category	Brand Name	Model Name	Color Appearance	Lamp Specifications				
					Type of Lamp	Light Output, lumens	Wattage Rating, watts	Efficacy, lumens per watt	Average Life, hours
1	60W	G.E	FLE60HLX	Daylight	Spiral	3300	60	60	6000
2	55W	G-LUX	-	Daylight	4U	2750	55	-	6000
3	50W	OMNI	ESM-50W-DL	Daylight	Spiral	2750	50	55	7000
4		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	4U-BL	3100	50	62	6000
5	45W	G.E.	FLE45HLX	Daylight	Spiral	2750	45	62	6000
6		AKARI	ESL4U45DL	Daylight	4U	2600	45	-	6000
7		DELTA	-	Daylight	Spiral	-	45	-	5000
8	40W	FIREFLY	KEU48-40W-DL	Daylight	4U-BL	2200	40	-	5000
9	30W	CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	3U-BL	-	30	-	5000
10		TOSHIBA	Neoball-E	Daylight	4U-BL	-	30	-	5000
11		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	4U-BL	1860	30	62	6000
12	27W	STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	4U	1288	27	56	6000
13	26W	CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	3U-BL	-	26	-	5000
14		ARMAFLEX	-	Daylight	3U-BL	1066	26	41	4000
15	25W	A. OPTIMA	TA 3U 25W	Daylight	3U	1500	25	60	6000
16	24W	GARTIM	EB-LB24AP	Daylight	Spiral	1440	24	60	8000
17		NOVA	ESL-EUM-24W	Daylight	3U	*	24	62	6000
18	23W	HITACHI	EFH-23E	Daylight	3U	*	23	*	8000
19		HITACHI	EFS-23E	Daylight	Spiral	*	23	*	8000
20		PHILIPS	Tornado	Daylight	Spiral	1450	23	66	6000
21		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	3U	1120	23	56	6000
22		STARLUX	SUPER TWIST	Daylight	Spiral	1380	23	60	6000
23		DELTA	-	Daylight	Spiral	-	23	-	5000
24		PHILIPS	Tonado-DL	Daylight	Spiral	1420	23	65	6000
25		STARLUX	Globe-DL	Daylight	Globe	-	23	-	6000
26	22W	G.E.	Electronic FLP	Daylight	Encap	1280	22	58	6000
27		G.E	EFLP	Daylight	Encap	1240	22	56	4000
28		G.E.	Elec. FLP	Daylight	Encap	1284	22	56	4000
29		OMNI	EL3U-22 DL	Daylight	3U	1200	22	55	5000
30		OMNI	EL3U-22W	Daylight	3U-BL	1200	22	60	6000
31	21W	DURALUX	-	Daylight	3U-BL	1200	21	57	4000
32		TOSHIBA	Neoball-E	Warm White	4U-BL	-	21	-	6000
33		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	Spiral	1260	21	60	6000
34	20W	A. OPTIMA	TA 3U 20W	Daylight	3U	1200	20	60	6000
35		PHILIPS	Ecotone	Daylight	Encap	1100	20	55	10000
36		PHILIPS	SLE P	Daylight	Encap	1100	20	55	10000
37		PHILIPS	SLED	Warm White	Encap	1100	20	55	10000
38		PHILIPS	Ecotone SLED	Daylight	Encap	1050	20	53	10000
39		HITACHI	EFH-20E	Daylight	3U	*	20	*	8000
40		HITACHI	EFS-20E	Daylight	Spiral	*	20	*	8000
41		DELTA	Brite Saver	Daylight	3U	*	20	*	6000
42		OSRAM	Dulux EE	Daylight	3U	1140	20	57	6000
43		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	3U	1050	20	52	4000
44		G.E. Edison	FLE20DBXE27	Daylight	3U	1120	20	60	6000
45		G.E.	ECN-FLE 20W	Daylight	3U	1050	20	52	4000
46		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	3U	1200	20	60	4000
47		PHILIPS	Tornado	Daylight	Spiral	1250	20	66	6000
48		PHILIPS	Globe	Daylight	Encap	1050	20	53	10000
49		G.E.	FLE20TBX	Daylight	3U	1120	20	60	6000
50	20	STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	3U	1120	20	56	6000
51		ARO	EUT-20W	Daylight	3U-BL	1170	20	59	6000
52		PHILIPS	Ecotone	Warm White	Globe	1050	20	53	10000
53		GARTIM	EB-LB20AP	Daylight	Spiral	1230	20	60	8000
54		OMNI	ELG-20W-DL	Daylight	Globe	*	20	*	6000
55		MEGAMAN	Classic	Daylight	Encap	1000	20	-	10000
56		QUZON	YPZ-QLS/L3U	Daylight	3U	-	20		6000
57		G.E.	FLE20TBX864E27	Daylight	3U	1120	20	-	6000
58		G.E.	FLE20TBX827E27	Warm White	Spiral	1350	20		6000
59	18W	PHILIPS	Essential	Daylight	3U	1040	18	58	6000
60			-	Daylight	3U	*	18	*	6000
61		G.E	Electronic FLP	Daylight	Encap	960	18	53	6000
62		G.E	Electronic FLP	Daylight	Encap	960	18	53	5000
63		G.E.	EFLP 18W	Daylight	Encap	960	18	53	4000
64		A. OPTIMA	TA 3U 18W	Daylight	3U	1080	18	60	6000
65		CLIPSAL	Energy Saver	Daylight	3U	*	18	*	8000
66		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	3U	924	18	56	6000
67		CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	3U-BL	-	18	-	5000
68		G.E.	FLE18TBX	Daylight	3U	1010	18	56	8000
69		HANDYMAN	Electronic	Daylight	3U-BL	-	18	-	6000
70		TOSHIBA	EFD18D/65-E3U	Daylight	3U-BL	-	18	-	6000
71		TUNGSRAM	FLT18WBX	Daylight	3U-BL	1081	18	60	4000
72		STARLUX	SUPER TWIST	Daylight	Spiral	1080	18	60	6000
73		OMNI	ESL-18W-DL	Daylight	Encap	*	18	*	6000
74		DELTA	-	Daylight	3U	-	18	-	5000
75		FIREFLY	XEU38-18W-WW	Warm White	3U	720	18	-	5000
76		FIREFLY	XEU48-18W-DL	Daylight	4U jr.	900	18	-	5000
77		ARMAFLEX	-	Daylight	3U	1049	18	58	4000
78		AKARI	AESL3U-18DL	Daylight	3U	1080	18		6000
79	16W	OMNI	EL3U-16 DL	Daylight	3U	800	16	50	5000
80		DURALUX	-	Daylight	3U-BL	968	16	60	4000
81	15W	A. OPTIMA	TA 2U 15W	Daylight	2U	900	15	60	6000
82		GARTIM	EB-15AP	Daylight	Spiral	800	15	53	10000
83		PHILIPS	Ecotone	Daylight	Encap	800	15	53	10000
84		PHILIPS	SLE-P	Daylight	Encap	760	15	51	10000
85		PHILIPS	Ecotone SLED	Warm White	Encap	800	15	53	10000
86		G.E.	FLE-HLX 15W	Daylight	Spiral	840	15	56	6000
87		G.E.	ECN-FLE 15W	Daylight	3U	830	15	55	4000
88		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	3U	830	15	55	4000
89		G.E	FLE HLX	Daylight	Spiral	920	15	61	6000
90		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	3U	830	15	56	4000
91		G.E.	FLE 15TBX	Daylight	3U	830	15	57	4000
92		G.E.	FLE15TBX	Daylight	3U	800	15	53	4000

Item No.	Wattage Category	Brand Name	Model Name	Color Appearance	Lamp Specifications: Type of Lamp	Light Output, lumens	Wattage Rating, watts	Efficacy, lumens per watt	Average Life, hours
93	15W	G.E. Edison	FLE15DBXE27	Daylight	3U	830	15	57	6000
94		ARO	EUS-15W	Warm White	2U	900	15	60	6000
95		ARO	EUS-15W	Daylight	2U	900	15	60	6000
96		CETRIX	Brillant	Daylight	3U	820	15	*	6000
97		OMNI	EL2U-15 DL	Daylight	2U	750	15	55	5000
98		LUXMAN	15	Daylight	2U	*	15	*	6000
99		OMNI	ML3U-15 DL	Daylight	3U	825	15	55	5000
100		EUROLUX	Maximizer	Daylight	2U	*	15	*	5000
101		PHILIPS	Globe	Daylight	2U	760	15	51	10000
102		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	2U	812	15	56	6000
103		ARO	EUS-15W	Daylight	2U-BL	820	15	55	6000
104		CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	3U-BL	-	15	-	5000
105		G.E.	FLE-TBX	Daylight	3U	872	15	58	8000
106		OMNI	ML3U-15W	Daylight	3U-BL	825	15	55	6000
107		PHILIPS	ECOTONE	Daylight	Encap	800	15	53	10000
108		PHILIPS	Ecotone	Daylight	Encap	800	15	53	10000
109		STARLUX	GLS-15W-DL	Daylight	Spiral	675	15	45	6000
110		STARLUX	SUPER TWIST	Daylight	Spiral	825	15	55	6000
111		QUZON	YPZ-QLS/L3U	Daylight	3U	-	15	-	6000
112		DELTA	-	Daylight	Spiral	-	15	-	5000
113		G.E	FLETBX864E27	Daylight	3U	830	15	-	6000
114		OMNI	ELG-15W-DL	Daylight	GLOBE	650	15	43	6000
115		PHILIPS	Ecotone	Daylight	Encap	800	15	53	10000
116		PHILPS	Ecotone	Daylight	Encap	760	15	51	10000
117		FIREFLY	XEU22-15W-WW	Warm White	2U	750	15	-	5000
118		FIREFLY	XEU23-15T-DL	Daylight	Spiral	720	15	-	5000
119		AKARI	AESL3U-15DL	Daylight	2U	810	15	-	6000
120	14W	PHILIPS	Genie	Warm White	3U	800	14	57	6000
121		PHILIPS	Essential-Genie	Daylight	3U	760	14	54	6000
122		PHILIPS	Essential	Daylight	2U	760	14	54	6000
123		TUNGSRAM	FLT14WDBX/827	Warm White	3U-BL	799	14	57	4000
124		TUNGSRAM	FLT14WDBX/864	Daylight	3U-BL	743	14	53	4000
125		LUMIMAX	-	Daylight	2U	-	14	-	5000
126	13W	LANDLITE	ELM 13W	Daylight	2U	760	13	58	5000
127		CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	2U-BL	-	13	-	5000
128		TOSHIBA	EFD13D/65-E3U	Daylight	3U-BL	-	13	-	6000
129		OMNI	EMM-13W-SPR	Daylight	Spiral	*	13	*	6000
130		ARMAFLEX	-	Daylight	Spiral	663	13	51	4000
131	12W	DURALUX	-	Daylight	2U-BL	629	12	52	4000
132		G.E.	FLE12HLX827	Warm White	Spiral	660	12	-	6000
133		G.E.	FLE12HLX865	Daylight	Spiral	700	12	-	6000
134		G.E	FLE12TBX864E27	Daylight	3U-BL	650	12	-	6000
135		G.E.	FLE12HLX860E27	Daylight	3U-BL	700	12	-	6000
136		G.E.	FLE12HLX827E27	Warm White	3U-BL	700	12	-	6000
137	11W	A. OPTIMA	TA 2U 11W	Daylight	2U	605	11	55	6000
138		HITACHI	EFD-11E	Daylight	2U	*	11	*	4000
139		DELTA	Brite Saver	Daylight	2U	*	11	*	6000
140		GARTIM	EB-11AP	Daylight	2U	590	11	54	6000
141		PHILIPS	Genie	Daylight	3U	570	11	52	6000
142		PHILIPS	Ecotone PLEU	Daylight	2U	490	11	45	6000
143		PHILIPS	Genie	Warm White	3U	600	11	55	6000
144		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	580	11	53	4000
145		G.E.	FLE-HLX 11W	Daylight	Spiral	590	11	54	6000
146		G.E.	ECN-FLE 11DBX	Daylight	2U	580	11	53	4000
147		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	590	11	53	4000
148		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	960	11	55	4000
149		G.E.	FLE11DBX	Daylight	2U	590	11	53	6000
150		G.E.	ECN-FLE 11W	Daylight	2U	580	11	53	4000
151		G.E. Edison	FLE11DBXE27	Daylight	2U	590	11	56	6000
152		ARO	EUS-11W	Warm White	2U	600	11	55	6000
153		ARO	EUS-11W	Daylight	2U	600	11	55	6000
154		CLIPSAL	Energy Saver	Daylight	2U	*	11	*	8000
155		NOVA	ESL-EUM 11W	Daylight	2U	*	11	*	6000
156		OMNI	ML3U-011W DL	Daylight	3U	605	11	55	5000
157		LUXMAN	ELD 11 Daylight	Daylight	2U	*	11	*	6000
158		G.E.	FLE11DBX	Daylight	2U	590	11	56	6000
159		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	590	11	56	6000
160		ARO	EUS-11W	Daylight	2U-BL	590	11	54	6000
161		G.E.	FLE-DBX	Daylight	2U	590	11	53	8000
162		OMNI	ML3U-11W	Daylight	3U-BL	605	11	55	6000
163		TOSHIBA	EFD11D/65-E3U	Daylight	3U-BL	-	11	-	6000
164		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	mini 3U	605	11	55	6000
165		QUZON	YPZ-QLS/L2U	Daylight	2U	-	11	-	6000
166		FOCUS	-	Daylight	2U	-	11	-	4000
167		LUMIMAX	-	Daylight	2U	-	11	-	5000
168		FIREFLY	XEU22-11W-DL	Daylight	2U	550	11	-	5000
169		FIREFLY	XEU23-11U	Daylight	3U jr	550	11	-	5000
170		AKARI	AESL2U-11DL	Daylight	2U	605	11		6000
171	10W	EUROLUX	Maximizer	Daylight	Spiral	*	10	*	5000
172		TUNGSRAM	FLT10WDBX/827	Warm White	2U-BL	615	10	61	4000
173		TUNGSRAM	FLT10WDBX/864	Daylight	2U-BL	586	10	58	4000
174		OMNI	EMB-10W-DL	Daylight	Encap	*	10	*	6000
175		OSRAM	DULUXSTAR	Warm White	2U-BL	500	10		6000
176	9W	HITACHI	EFD-9E	Daylight	2U	*	9	*	6000
177		ARO	EUS-9W	Warm White	2U	500	9	55	6000
178		ARO	EUS-9W	Daylight	2U	500	9	55	6000
179		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	450	9	50	4000
180		G.E.	ECN-FLE 9W	Daylight	2U	450	9	50	4000
181		G.E.	Economizer	Warm White	2U	450	9	50	4000
182		G.E.	ECN-FLE 9DBX	Daylight	2U	450	9	50	4000
183		G.E. Edison	FLE9DBXE27	Daylight	2U	480	9	53	6000
184		G.E.	Economizer	Daylight	2U	450	9	50	4000
185		G.E.	FLE-HLX	Daylight	Spiral	430	9	60	4000
186		TOKINA	Energy Saver	Daylight	2U	380	9	42	8000
187		LUXMAN	ELD 9 Daylight	Daylight	2U	*	9	*	6000
188		CETRIX	Brillant	Daylight	2U	470	9	*	6000
189		G.E.	FLE9TBXE14	Daylight	3U	460	9	51	8000
190		EUROLUX	Maximizer	Daylight	2U	*	9	*	5000
191		G.E.	Economizer	Warm White	3U	460	9	50	5000
192		G.E.	FLE 9TBX	Daylight	3U	460	9	50	8000
193		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	2U	448	9	56	6000
194	9W	CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	2U-BL	-	9	-	5000
195		GARTIM	EB-9AP-DL	Daylight	2U-BL	470	9	52	5500
196		OMNI	EL2U-9W	Daylight	2U-BL	450	9	50	6000
197		STARLUX		Daylight	Encap	405	9	45	6000
198		TOSHIBA	EFD9D/65-E3U	Daylight	3U-BL	-	9	-	6000
199		STARLUX	SUPER TWIST	Daylight	Spiral	468	9	52	6000
200		AKARI	ESL2U9DL	Daylight	2U	2600	9	-	6000
201		UNIVERSAL	-	Daylight	2U	-	9	-	4000
202		DELTA	-	Daylight	2U	-	9	-	5000
203		OMNI	EL2U-9W DL	Daylight	2U	450	9	50	6000
204		G.E.	FLE9DBX864	Daylight	2U	460	9	-	6000
205		G.E.	FLE9BDX864E27	Daylight	2U	460	9		6000
206		FIREFLY	XEU23-9W-WW	Warm White	2U	400	9	-	5000
207		FIREFLY	XEU22-9W-WW	Warm White	2U	450	9	-	5000
208		ARMAFLEX	-	Daylight	2U	414	9	-	4000
209		AKARI	AESL2U-9DL	Daylight	2U	378	9	-	6000
210	8W	OSRAM	EL Economy	Daylight	2U	400	8	50	6000
211		PHILIPS	Genie	Warm White	3U	420	8	53	6000
212		PHILIPS	Essential-Genie	Daylight	3U	400	8	50	6000
213		PHILIPS	Essential	Daylight	2U	380	8	48	6000
214		PHILIPS	Genie	Daylight	3U	400	8	50	6000
215		A. OPTIMA	T42U8W	Daylight	2U	440	8	55	6000
216		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	mini 3U	400	8	50	6000
217		G.E.	FLE8HLX827	Warm White	Spiral	430	8	-	6000
218		G.E.	FLE8HLX865	Daylight	Spiral	460	8	-	6000
219		OSRAM	DULUXSTAR	Warm White	3U	400	8		6000
220	7W	GARTIM	EB-7AP	Daylight	2U	370	7	53	6000
221		AKARI	-	Daylight	2U	350	7	50	6000
222		LANDLITE	ELM 7W	Daylight	2U	350	7	50	5000
223		CETRIX	Brillant	Daylight	2U	350	7	*	6000
224		NOVA	ESL-EUM 7W	Daylight	2U	*	7	*	6000
225		OMNI	ML2U-07W DL	Daylight	2U	315	7	45	5000
226		FIREFLY Jr.	XEU23-7W	Daylight	2U	315	7	45	5000
227		ARO	EUS-7W	Warm White	2U-BL	330	7	47	6000
228		CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	2U-BL	-	7	-	5000
229		GARTIM	EB-7AP-DL		2U-BL	350	7	50	6000
230		OMNI	ML2-7W	Daylight	2U-BL	315	7	45	6000
231		TOSHIBA	EFD7D/65-E	Daylight	2U-BL	-	7	-	6000
232		STARLUX	Candle SL-7W	Daylight	Encap	315	7	45	6000
233		FOCUS	-	Daylight	2U	-	7	-	4000
234		DELTA	-	Daylight	2U	-	7	-	5000
235		FIREFLY	XEU237W-WW	Daylight	2U jr	315	7		5000
236	6W	G.E.	ECN-FLE 6W	Daylight	2U	260	6	43	4000
237	5W	GARTIM	EB-5AP	Daylight	2U	250	5	50	6000
238		PHILIPS	Genie	Warm White	2U	235	5	47	6000
239		PHILIPS	Essential-Genie	Daylight	2U	220	5	44	6000
240		A. OPTIMA	TA2U5W	Daylight	2U	225	5	45	6000
241		CETRIX	Brillant	Daylight	2U	250	5	50	6000
242		OMNI	ETF-5W	Daylight	Encap	180	5	36	5000
243		OMNI	ML2U-05W DL	Daylight	2U	225	5	45	5000
244		EUROLUX	Maximizer	Daylight	2U	238	5	*	5000
245		PHILIPS	Genie	Warm White	2U	220	5	44	6000
246		TUNGSRAM	FLT5WDBX	Daylight	2U	236	5	47	6000
247		ARO	EUS-5W	Warm White	2U-BL	250	5	50	6000
248		CITYLIGHT	ESL	Daylight	2U-BL	-	5	-	5000
249		OMNI	ML2-5W	Daylight	2U-BL	225	5	45	6000
250		TUNGSRAM	FLT5WDBX/864	Daylight	2U-BL	223	5	44	4000
251		TUNGSRAM	FLT5WDBX/827	Warm White	2U-BL	236	5	47	4000
252		STARLUX	ESL	Daylight	mini2U	250	5	50	6000
253		AKARI	ESL2U5DL	Daylight	2U	195	5	39	6000
254		OMNI	ETF-5W-DL	Daylight	2U	225	5	45	6000
255		FIREFLY	XEU23-5W-WW	Warm White	2u jr	225	5		5000
256	3W	GARTIM	EB-3AP	Daylight	2U	140	3	47	6000
257		AKARI	AES 2U-3DL	Daylight	2U	195	3	-	6000

Note: The above list is continuously updated and posted at the Department of Energy at website address: www.doe.gov.ph

Congratulations!

Department of Energy-Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation (PELMATP) Project Team

"PALIT-ILAW, TIPID NA, LIGTAS PA!"

Ranked top 5 in the International COM+ Communications Award in Climate Change Category

Winners will be acknowledged both at the CGIAR Annual General Meetings in Beijing, China in early December and at the award ceremony at the Climate Change COP in Bali, Indonesia.

Alternative fuels program for the country

Alternative fuels are substantially non-petroleum, which is consumed to provide energy to power an engine and yield energy security and environmental benefits:

Natural Gas (compressed or liquid), mixture containing or more by volume of alcohol fuel including ethanol and methanol, biodiesel (coco-biodiesel or coco-methyl ester), electricity (electric vehicle, hybrid vehicle), hydrogen, coal-derived liquid fuels, and fuels derived from biological materials.

The Alternative Fuels Program is one of the five key components of the Arroyo Administration's Energy Independence Agenda, which outlines the roadmap that will lead to the country's attainment of 60% energy self-sufficiency by 2010.

The Department of Energy (DOE) is implementing a long-term Alternative Fuels Program to (1) reduce the country's dependence on imported oil and (2) provide cheaper and more environment-friendly alternatives to fossil fuels.

Through the said program, the DOE intends to tap the country's domestic produce as viable sources of energy. The goal is to develop indigenous and renewable energy fuels for long term energy security, which will be a pillar of our country's sustainable growth.

Alternative fuels are fuels that are not composed substantially of petroleum and thus, are alternatives to petroleum. As a substitute to this "traditional" fuel, it is expected to yield significant energy security and environmental benefits to its consumers.

Methanol, denatured ethanol, and other alcohols blended with gasoline, diesel or other fuels are alternative fuels. Those that act as substitutes to petroleum, such as natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, hydrogen, and coal-derived liquid fuels are also considered as alternative fuels, as are fuels derived from biological materials and electricity.

Biofuel refers to fuels made from biomass and primarily used for motive, thermal and power generation, with quality specifications in accordance with the Philippine National Standards (PNS).

The Alternative Fuels Program has four major subprograms, namely Biodiesel Program, Bioethanol Program, Natural Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport (NGVPPT), and Autogas Program. Other technologies advocated under the program are hybrid, fuel cell, hydrogen and electric vehicles.

Both Houses of Congress ratified the Biofuels Act of 2006 last November 29, 2006, which mandates a minimum 1% biodiesel blend and 5% bioethanol blend by volume in all diesel and gasoline fuels, respectively, being distributed and sold in the country. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed the Bill into law on January 12, 2007.

A high-octane, water-free alcohol produced from the fermentation of sugar or converted starch. In its purest form it is a colorless clear liquid with mild characteristic odor that boils at 78oC and freezes at 112oC. It has no basic or acidic combustion engines either on its own or blended with petroleum. Hydrous bioethanol (95% purity) is used for blending with gasoline.

The Department of Trade and Industry-Bureau of Products Standard, the Department of Energy in cooperation of private sectors developed and promulgated standards for the bioethanol program to ensure the fuel quality.

Fuel ethanol is a high-octane, water free alcohol produced from the fermentation of sugar or converted starch.

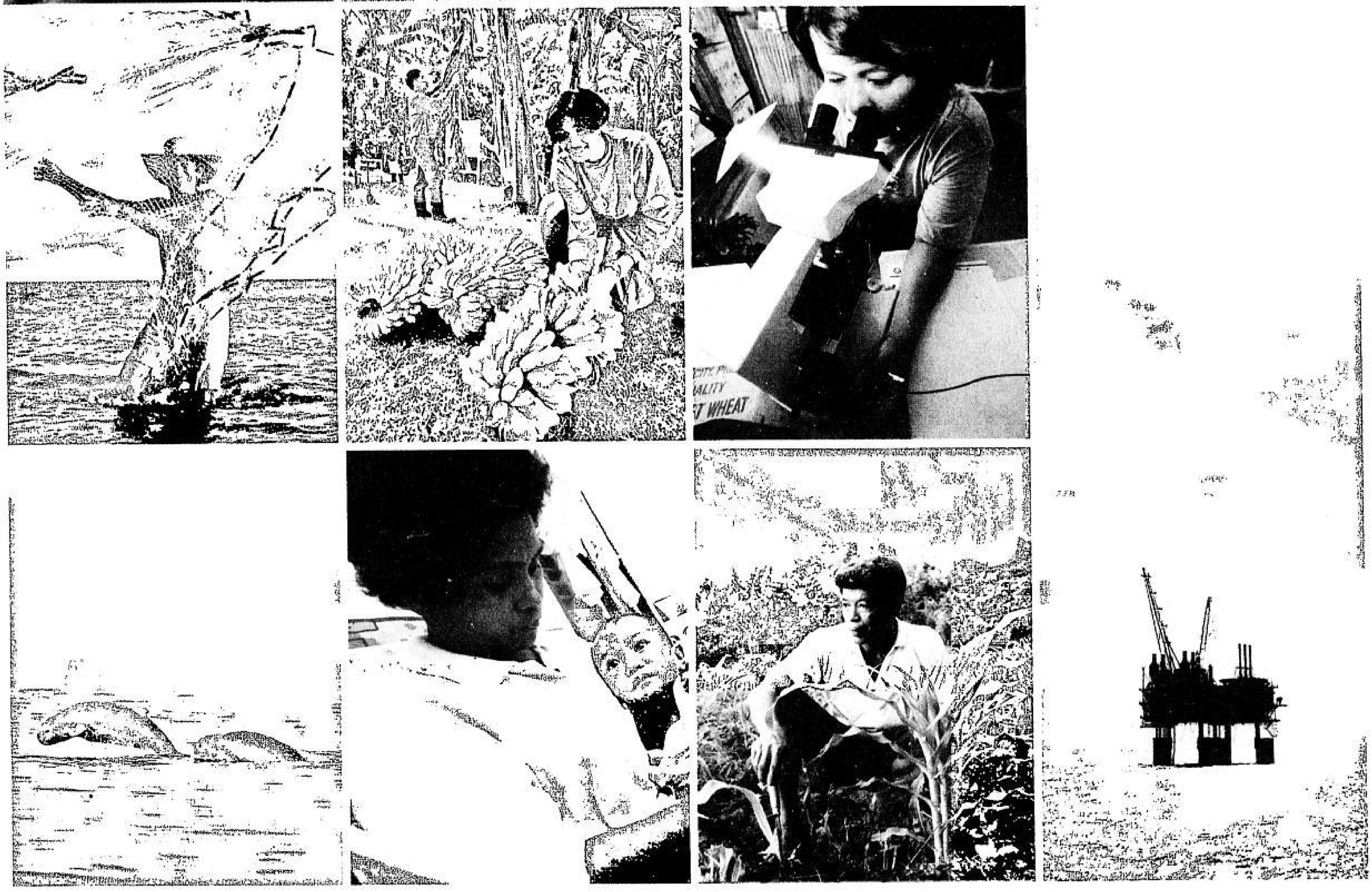
It is traditionally used as a blending ingredient at 5%-10% concentrations in gasoline or as a raw material to produce high-octane fuel ether additives. Ethanol is made primarily from sugarcane, corn, wheat, sorghum, and other feedstocks. In the Philippines, sugarcane is the most readily available feedstock. Cassava and sweet sorghum are also potential feedstocks.

Ethanol has a high natural 'octane' rating that prevents premature detonation under load

It burns more cleanly because it contains oxygen, hence less carbon monoxide emissions, and burns slightly cooler, extending engine life

Ethanol higher 'volumetric efficiency' contributes to increased power.

Malampaya: The Nation's Partner in Progress



In partnership with the nation, the flow of indigenous natural gas is helping to fuel the country's growth and progress. And in cooperation with our partners in Palawan, Oriental Mindoro and Batangas, health improvement, livelihood generation programs and assistance in environment conservation efforts are being undertaken to help enable sustainable development.

MALAMPAYA

DEEP WATER GAS TO POWER

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY PHILIPPINES

Chevron

PNOC
The Energy Company